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**ALAN COREN'S
ROYAL DIARY**

Goodbye,
Prime Minister
...such a very
nice man
PAGE 18



Shepherd attack on Labour as education Bill is casualty of last-minute deal to clear decks

Tories forced to abandon school plans

By Philip Webster, Arthur Leathley and Janet Bush

FLAGSHIP plans to allow greater selection and the expansion of grant-maintained schools were sacrificed by the Government yesterday in the rush to clear the legislative decks before Parliament rises on Friday for the general election.

On the second day of the election campaign, Conservative business managers were forced, during negotiations with their Labour counterparts, to drop 19 clauses from the education Bill, including plans which they said would pave the way for a grammar school in every large town.

The Tories reacted angrily last night. Gillian Shepherd, the Education Secretary, claimed that Labour had "shown themselves in their true colours. However much they pretend, we now know what Labour really believes. They are opposed to excellence, opposed to choice, opposed to diversity, indifferent to standards of good behaviour."

She said that Labour had ignored the wishes of four out of five voters who want selection in schools.

The proposals were the main casualty of the horse-trading between the Labour and Tory whips, which was designed to get as much legislation through as possible before MPs depart.

In return, Labour has agreed to accept the Bill's proposal to extend to preparatory schools the assisted places scheme, which it is committed to phasing out.

Another minister said: "This

proves that Labour is against selection, apart from those members of the front-bench who want it for their own children."

The Government pledged, however, to bring back the proposals in its election manifesto and to make them a substantial campaigning

TV WATCH

NICHOLAS WAPSHOTT

6 Blair was not flustered, but you could tell by his face that he is rarely spoken to like this. He is used to being applauded?

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theme. The bulk of the Bill's clauses will remain, including those increasing discipline, introducing home-school contracts between schools and parents, Ofsted inspection powers over local education authorities, assessments of children entering primary schools and targets for improving standards in schools.

Regulation of supply teachers and reforms to the careers service will also survive under the whips' agreement.

In another deal last night, Labour agreed to allow through the crime Bill proposed by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary. However, it will support a Lords amendment giving judges more discretion over minimum sentences. The vote in the Commons is expected tomorrow and it appears likely that the Government will be able to overturn the defeat it sustained last month.

Mrs Shepherd was also defeated over the education Bill last month, when peers supported moves that would require schools planning to increase selection to consult affected neighbouring schools. Any objections would trigger a local public inquiry. The Lords defeat came after MPs rejected government plans to relax controls on grant-maintained schools, allowing them to increase by 50 per cent the proportion of pupils selected by ability.

The behind-the-scenes manoeuvrings took place yesterday as the main parties began marking out the battle lines for the campaign.

Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, set out his plans to impose a windfall tax on the privatised utilities, although his refusal to name the companies affected was described as disgraceful by the Tories. Mr Brown claimed that a damning all-party report on

Continued on page 2, col 5



Norma and John Major together on the campaign trail yesterday. Her smile waned as he toyed with racing car

Face that says I'd rather not be here

By Arthur Leathley
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NORMA MAJOR'S finely-honed "celebrity smile" vanished abruptly yesterday to reveal a persistently glum expression as her husband tried to inject a dash of glamour into the day-old election campaign.

John Major was clearly delighted at the prospect of meeting David Coulthard, Britain's most recent motor racing hero, and getting the chance to meddle with one of

the fastest cars on Earth. But his wife, after flashing an initial smile to waiting photographers, looked decidedly fed up with the rest of the visit to McLaren's Formula One racing plant in Surrey.

Whether she was suffering first-day campaign nerves or a wife's natural boredom in watching her husband fiddle with macho racing machines, her gloomy countenance did little to lighten the Tory campaign mood.

After an hour-long visit, Mrs Major fled the Woking plant in a separate car

from the Prime Minister, renewing Tory worries that she may not be an eager traveller on the campaign trail.

Mr Major's trip was primed by Tory strategists to conjure up images of racing starts, victories and even a little sporting machismo. Instead, the day was marred by minor mishaps.

The media on the Tory campaign battle-bus travelled towards the McLaren factory with appetites whetted by promises that Coulthard's

Australian Grand Prix-winning car would be "fired up". Their enthusiasm waned on arrival. The shell of the car, without wheels, was balanced precariously on a pair of trestles.

Undaunted, Mr Major strode to the gleaming machine with all the purpose of a racing champion. Alas, the detachable steering wheel came off in his hands.

When he tried to talk about privatised rail cancellations, his speech was drowned — by a passing high-speed train.

Cabinet ministers lose fast track to the Lords

By Our Political Editor

JOHN MAJOR is preparing to break with tradition by declining to give life peerages to all the former senior ministers retiring at the general election.

In a move that will send a tremor down the long list of ministers counting on a second career in the House of Lords, the Prime Minister has indicated that he believes life peerages should go to senior figures likely to carry on working — and voting — for the Conservative cause in the Upper House. Those thought more likely to devote most of their time to business could be disappointed.

It has been a long-standing convention that Cabinet service guarantees a peerage — Sir John Nott, Defence Secretary during the Falklands war, was one of very few not to be so honoured.

But Mr Major has been disappointed by the voting records of some ennobled in 1992 and he now wants to shift the approach, using life peerages to reward loyalty and long service in important backbench posts.

He has a limited number of peerages at his disposal and does not believe that former ministers who regularly rebel against the Government from the backbenches should have a claim ahead of hard-working MPs who have backed a prime minister through thick and thin. It has also been noted that several former MPs who did not reach the Cabinet, such as Lord Clark of Kempston, have been excellent members in the Lords.

Win or lose on May 1, Mr Major will be responsible for June's dissolution honours

Continued on page 2, col 7

Surgeon shot over 'nothing'

Benjamin Dalton, a 29-year-old British surgeon, was shot dead in an argument "over nothing" with policemen at a checkpoint in the Congo.

Diana Dalton said: "Benjamin grabbed me by the arms and said 'Run'. I heard a number of shots and thought 'My God they are going to kill us'. I saw Benjamin fall. I bent down to him and saw the blood running down his back. He just opened his eyes and died in my arms." — Page 3

Soap star

Sid Shaw won his High Court battle against America's Elvis Presley industry for the right to carry on selling Presley novelties from his east London shop. The judge liked Mr Shaw's soap so much that he took a bar home. — Page 7

Thatcher archive to join Churchill's at Cambridge

By Alan Hamilton

BARONESS THATCHER announced yesterday that she is giving her archive of personal and political papers on permanent loan to Churchill College, Cambridge, to allow scholars to study the longest premiership of the 20th century.

More than 1,000 boxes of documents, videos, photographs and personal effects will be handed over for safe keeping in the college strongrooms, where they will join the archive of Lady Thatcher's hero, Sir Winston Churchill. The Thatcher Foundation has been keeping the documents at its London office while their owner wrote her memoirs and has rebuffed many approach-

es from American universities and other foreign institutions anxious to possess an important slice of modern history.

Lady Thatcher said yesterday that she had always wanted her papers to remain in Britain. "I am therefore delighted that they are going to Churchill College, where they will join the papers of many distinguished 20th-century figures, including of course those of Sir Winston Churchill himself. I hope they will be a valuable source for students and scholars who wish to study the great changes brought about by the governments that I had the privilege to lead."

Scholars will not, however, have immediate and unlimited access to the papers. Many will be covered by the Government's 30-year rule on the opening of state papers and historians anxious to unearth the secrets of the Falklands War, the poll tax revolt or the 1984 miners' strike — three milestones of the Thatcher era likely to be of particular interest — will have to be patient or persuade the Cabinet Office to make exceptions. The Thatcher Foundation is anxious to avoid the debacle that surrounded the Churchill archive two years ago, when Sir Winston's grandson and

Continued on page 2, col 4

Zaire braced for military takeover

From Sam Kiley in Kinshasa

THE prospects of a military coup in Zaire grew yesterday after the Parliament passed a vote of no confidence in the Prime Minister.

Opposition MPs said they had the backing of military leaders and would appoint a successor to Leon Kengo wa Dondo "very soon". At the same time, several members of President Mobutu Sese Seko's family were reported to have fled across the River Congo to Brazzaville, apparently fearing that they would be priority targets either for the army or a popular uprising in support of the rebel leader Laurent Kabila. The President is being treated for cancer in Monaco.

Mr Kabila's forces are about 200 miles east, but the tension after the rebels' weekend victory at Kisangani is a further sign that Mr Mobutu's 31-year rule is close to an end.

The vote against Mr Kengo — who left for talks in Nairobi yesterday — narrowly missed the three quarters majority necessary to remove him from office, but opposition leaders said that his administration would be unable to function as they would ask the army to take over the central bank.

Many believe that the military could fill the vacuum left by a government unable to run the war effort and forbidden by the President from negotiating with Mr Kabila.

Apples lose their appeal as Britons go bananas

By Michael Hornsby
AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

BANANAS, once an exotic luxury item, have replaced apples as Britain's most popular fresh fruit, with about five billion eaten every year.

It is a far cry from the dark days of the Second World War when beleaguered Britons had to satisfy their craving for the fruit with a concoction of mashed parsnips flavoured with sugar and banana essence. Bananas were unavailable from 1939 to 1945, and for children born during those years, the fruit was such a novelty that the Attlee Government distributed one free to everyone under the age of 18 when the first postwar supplies arrived.

The banana-eating habit recovered strongly, but really took off only in the past 15 years when the fruit was marketed as a convenience health food that was high in energy and low in calories. The average banana contains three times as much potassium as any other fruit, carotene and vitamins A, B6 and E.

Consumption of bananas averaged 185g per person per week last year, compared with 175g for apples, according to a report by the Ministry of Agriculture. Until last year, apples had held the top position since records began in 1940. Now, however, Britons are eating an average two bananas a week compared with one apple.

Bananas — strictly speaking, a species

of herb rather than a tree — are among the oldest cultivated plants in the world. They are thought to have originated in South-East Asia and are mentioned in a Buddhist text dating from around 600 BC.

Alexander the Great was probably the first European to eat a banana, tasting the fruit in India during his voyages of conquest. Arab traders are credited with bringing bananas to the Holy Land, Egypt and Africa. The word *banana* is Arabic for "finger". By the 16th century the fruit had reached the Caribbean.

Bananas came to Europe only in the late-19th century after the emergence of the refrigerated steam ship. The first commercial consignment of 20,000 bunches landed in September 1888.



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Soapbox John breaks out again, armed and dangerous

Major's minders may care to note that to get their man's adrenalin flowing, all they need do is drive him to a market square anywhere in England and invite a crowd of yobs to shout at him for an hour. Back from Luton, the Prime Minister entered the Chamber spoiling for a fight. John Major seems to have moved on in his imagination from the Commons chamber, and is now permanently on his soapbox. There were moments at Prime Minister's Questions when he looked ready to grab the Dispatch box, fling it to the floor and stand on it. Tony Blair, brandishing a sheaf of notes, tackled him on health service funding. Citizens should be warned not to approach Mr Major on this subject over the coming six weeks, as he is armed and extremely dangerous.



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Minister had even attacked Sir John Hughes. Attacking Mr Hughes (Lib Dem, Southwark & Bermondsey) is the political equivalent of stoning the budge.

A decent, earnest, harmless man, who does go on a bit, Hughes's question got rather bogged down. He had begun: "The Prime Minister made a uniquely personal decision to call the election for 1 May..."

"We know that!" shouted a

Tory heckler. Undeterred, Hughes twittered on. Parliament was to be "prorogued this Friday," he declared.

"We know that too!" came the heckle. But still he chirped. "What a windbag!" shouted the Tories. Miss Boothroyd interrupted the birdsong to beg him to "spit it out". He finally did. He wanted to know why the PM had arranged for the House to rise on Friday. Major snapped back that it

was to give him time to finish his question.

Major was not alone in his rush of pre-election aggression. Something seems to have happened to Stephen Dorrell in recent weeks which, to long-standing Dorrell-watchers, is rather disturbing. Previously a rational man, the Health Secretary now does little but shout.

At Health Questions yesterday, he started a sort of playground chant. Unlike the Opposition (he yelled) this Government was pledged to increase NHS spending "year on year, on year, on year, on year". All the Tory crawlers

behind him took up the refrain in mockingbird chorus: "year, on year, on year, on year" they bawled. Then Mr Dorrell tried it again. The Tories would increase spending, as they had over the last 18 years. "year, on year, on year, on year..."

For a dreadful moment we thought Dorrell was going to repeat this eighteen times. The stunt was stupid, the effect displeasing.

This palpable Left-winger is hoping to earn his spurs among the thug tendency in his party by playing King of the Kids. He should remember what happened to the last Tory Wet who tried this:

David Hunt. Not that anything made much sense yesterday. Labour's Rachel Squire (Dunfermline W) accused ministers of "closing thousands of elderly NHS beds." Andrew MacKinlay (Lab, Thurrock) was cross that the Transport Select Committee would be unable "to interview South West trains".

And the Prime Minister capped the lot. "More NHS patients are being created!" he announced.

We would advise Mr Major that turning electors — or indeed sentences — into stretcher cases is best left to John Prescott.

Teachers warn of boycott on reports

Teachers yesterday threatened to boycott national curriculum assessments and called for a ten-fold increase in the number of pupils expelled and sent to special schools. Failure to cut "unnecessary" assessment and report-writing would lead to a ballot on a boycott within a year, the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers said.

The union's also called for the limit on an unpromoted teacher's salary to rise to £30,000. In return, teachers would be expected to accept tougher checks on competence.

CSA complaints

The Whitehall ombudsman dealt with more complaints about the Child Support Agency than any other branch of government. They represented a quarter of the total caseload of almost 2,000 complaints, according to the annual report from Michael Buckley, the newly appointed ombudsman.

Island offer

Islanders in Harris, in the Hebrides, have been offered a possible £12 million by landowners to accept a giant open-cast quarry. The offer, over its 60-year life, is 2p per tonne of minerals sold. The quarry operators have already offered a community trust fund of £140,000 a year at peak production.

Water all-clear

More than 300,000 homes in parts of Hertfordshire and north London have been told they no longer have to boil their water, which had been contaminated with a bacterium. Three Valleys Water said that samples taken over the past five days had shown no trace of the cryptosporidium bug.

Prison inquest

A diabetic thief was found dead two days after being sent to Lincoln jail, an inquest was told yesterday. Brett Hay, 31, of Ipswich, had telephoned his wife hours earlier, saying he would die unless she alerted the authorities, but her efforts to contact his solicitor on a Sunday last July failed. The hearing continues.

Smile wiped off

A sculptor has redesigned a bronze relief of the Queen, which she is due to unveil at a Nottinghamshire school, after he was advised not to show her smiling. Sir Andrew Buchanan, Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, was unhappy with Gordon Brown's work because it showed the Queen's teeth.

Suspect revealed

Video still pictures of a sex attacker suspected of 19 assaults on women in the West Midlands were released by police. The images were taken by a camera inside a cash machine in Birmingham where he used credit cards stolen from a victim. Police believe he has been hiding since his attacks were featured on BBC's *Crimewatch*.

Major denies he sabotaged report on MP's sleaze

By Andrew Pierce, Political Correspondent

LABOUR and Liberal Democrat MPs expressed dismay yesterday that the report by Sir Gordon Downey, the standards commissioner, into the "cash-for-questions" affair will be kept a secret until after the general election.

John Major's decision to prorogue Parliament on Friday scuppered the publication of the Downey report into allegations against Neil Hamilton, a former minister, and other Tory MPs. Sir Gordon, who began his inquiry in October, when he was urged by the Speaker to conclude a swift investigation, is expected to complete the 150-page dossier early next week. Because of the prorogation, the Select Committee on Standards and Privileges, which was to have considered the report, will have been disbanded.

In the Commons yesterday, Mr Major denied that the imminent publication of the report had influenced his timing of the election announcement and hence of when Parliament would rise. He said that he had had "no knowledge" of when Sir Gordon was to present his report to the select committee which is chaired by Tony Newton, the Leader of the Commons.

After the election, the Nolan committee, set up by Mr Major to report on standards

in public life, will produce a report on the performance of Sir Gordon and of the privileges committee. The failure to publish the cash-for-questions report will dominate the Nolan inquiry. Sir Gordon has investigated allegations that MPs received cash to table questions in the Commons. He also looked at payments to 30 MPs fighting funds from the lobbyist Ian Greer.

Sir Gordon's report will not be seen by any MPs or the people to whom it refers. It will be locked in a safe in his office until after the campaign. Members of the Standards Committee were furious at the postponement of publication. Nigel Jones, Liberal Democrat MP for Cheltenham, said:



Downey: publication was expected next week

"Serious allegations have surfaced in the media against MPs that will not be answered before polling day.

In future, an independent organisation should investigate. Self-regulation of MPs by MPs does not work."

The Tory leadership, which had been braced for damaging headlines on the eve of the election, will be relieved that time has run out for Sir Gordon. Labour, which had hoped to capitalise on Tory "sleaze", will be infuriated.

Other Tory MPs under investigation include Michael Brown, MP for Brigg & Cleethorpes, Tim Smith, MP for Beaconsfield, and Sir Michael Grylls, who is retiring as MP for Surrey North West.

Labour accused the Prime Minister of opting for a six-week election campaign, to avoid further damaging "sleaze" disclosures. Brian Wilson, Labour's campaign spokesman, said that the country was wondering why there was to be such a long campaign. "Perhaps we now have the reason. If Mr Major had allowed Parliament to hang around for another week he would have been facing what is potentially the most explosive report on the conduct of MPs this century."

Leading article, page 19



Thatcher's archive will join Sir Winston Churchill's

Thatcher papers on loan

Continued from page 1 namesake, the Conservative MP for Daventry, put the papers up for sale despite their long-term residence in the college named after his grandfather. Eventually, the papers were bought for the nation with a £125 million National

Lottery grant. A spokesman for Lady Thatcher said yesterday that her children Mark and Carol were delighted with the Churchill College arrangement. Their mother has given the college £25,000 to pay for an archivist for a year to begin cataloguing her papers.

Brown and Clarke clash in windfall tax confusion

By Jill Sherman and Christine Buckley

GORDON BROWN and Kenneth Clarke clashed yesterday over Labour's proposed windfall tax on privatised utilities amid renewed confusion over which companies might have to pay the levy.

While sources close to Gordon Brown said that the airports operator BAA and British Telecom would be liable for the tax, other leadership figures insisted it was unlikely that these two firms would be affected.

Mr Clarke said the tax would present a "serious threat" to the country's continued recovery by imposing higher energy charges on both industry and consumers. The Chancellor said it was a "disgrace" that Mr Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, still refused to name the companies that would be affected by the tax which is expected to be introduced within weeks of a Labour election victory.

Mr Brown said he would not name the firms, because it would not be fair to do so in government after consultation with the regulators. But his aides said the tax could apply to all utilities privatised since 1979 which were regulated and licensed by statute.

The party's legal advisers say that Labour cannot name individual companies as this would be seen as unfair discrimination and could affect the markets. But Mr Brown's aides insisted that any regulated and licensed privatised

utility would be liable to be taxed if it made excess profits.

British Telecommunications, the airports operator BAA, Railtrack, British Gas and electricity and water companies all fall into this category.

But some sources later said it was unlikely that BT or BAA would have to pay. "All companies are liable, but that does not mean that all have to pay," said one. "Gas, electricity and water companies are the most likely to be hit."

Later Labour seized on an all-party committee report on how the energy industries have been controlled and regulated as justification for the windfall tax.

Lax price controls, excessive profits and a burden for the taxpayers through large job losses in electricity and gas were highlighted in the Trade and Industry Select Committee's investigation into energy regulation.

Martin O'Neill, the Labour chairman of the trade and industry committee said the report, which looks at how the independent regulators have controlled the gas and electricity companies since they were privatised "makes the case quite clear for some form of tax".

But John Butterfill, a Conservative member of the committee, said: "To suggest that we should have a windfall tax on the back of this report is a travesty."

Tories defy Major over immigration

By Andrew Pierce, Political Correspondent

TORY MPs in the West Midlands carried out their threat yesterday to publish a joint statement criticising Labour Party plans to weaken immigration rules.

The unanimous decision yesterday has signalled that many Tory MPs will play the race card in the general election campaign despite appeals from the Prime Minister not to do so.

But there was confusion over the position of senior Tories. A government whip, who attended the private meeting at the Commons last night, conspicuously failed to voice any criticism of the MPs' plans. Derek Conway, MP for Shrewsbury and Aitcham, and the West Midlands Tory Whip, was silent throughout the hour-long meeting.

In a new twist, sources close to the Prime Minister indicated last night that contrary to his public strictures to MPs not to raise immigration on the hustings, he was sympathetic to the actions of the West Midlands group of Tory MPs. Earlier this month Mr Major slapped down Nicho-

las Budgen, the MP for Wolverhampton South West, when he voiced concern over Labour's proposals during Prime Minister's Question Time. Mr Budgen highlighted Labour's plan to change the rule that gaining entry to Britain was not the primary purpose of an immigrant marrying a British citizen. Labour would also introduce a right of appeal for those refused a visitor's visa.

The senior Tory source said last night: "John Major misunderstood the question from Nick Budgen because he never heard what he was saying. He [Mr Major] believes strongly that we have got good race relations because we have such strong laws. He also believes that we have to limit the numbers. He thinks that immigration is becoming a big problem in Europe."

The disclosure of Mr Major's private thoughts will be seized on by Labour MPs who have long suspected that Tory MPs in inner city seats would exploit fears over immigration. It comes after Mr Major courted voters from the ethnic minorities last year.

Peerages

Continued from page 1 list, and he hopes his ideas will become the norm.

After the 1992 election he created 21 life peers of whom ten, including Baroness Thatcher, had served in Conservative Cabinets.

Eight former Cabinet ministers and two former chief whips leave the Commons on Friday when the present session of Parliament ends. They are: Kenneth Baker, John Biffen, Paul Channon, Douglas Hurd, Michael Jopling, Sir Patrick Mayhew, John Patten, David Howell and the two former Chief Whips, Tim Renton and Richard Ryder.

According to informed sources Mr Hurd, the former Foreign Secretary, and Sir Patrick, the Northern Ireland Secretary, are certain to receive peerages. Almost certainly on the list are Mr Ryder, Chief Whip for much of Mr Major's premiership, and Mr Jopling, Chief Whip and Agriculture Minister under Lady Thatcher.

Non-ministers who might be rewarded include Dame Jill Knight, Sir Peter Horden, Sir Terence Higgins, Sir Fergus Montgomery and Sir James Spicer.

Mr Major's expected move is also likely to be seen as a way to bring more discipline in the parliamentary party.

Smile wiped off

A sculptor has redesigned a bronze relief of the Queen, which she is due to unveil at a Nottinghamshire school, after he was advised not to show her smiling. Sir Andrew Buchanan, Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, was unhappy with Gordon Brown's work because it showed the Queen's teeth.

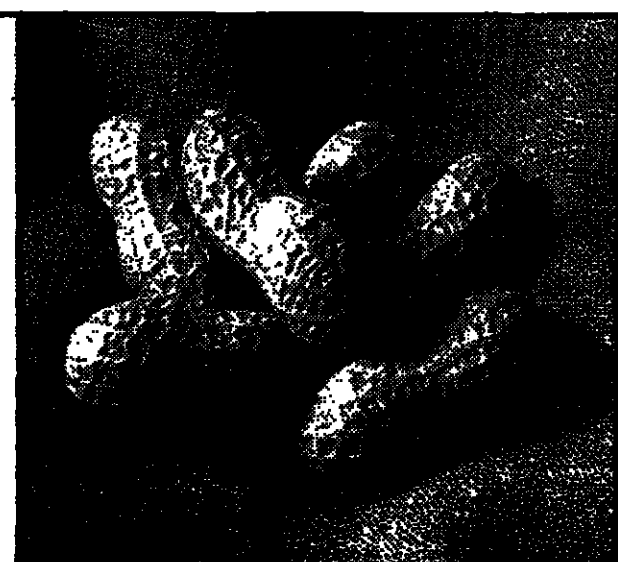
Suspect revealed

Video still pictures of a sex attacker suspected of 19 assaults on women in the West Midlands were released by police. The images were taken by a camera inside a cash machine in Birmingham where he used credit cards stolen from a victim. Police believe he has been hiding since his attacks were featured on BBC's *Crimewatch*.

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Tory plans dropped

Continued from page 1 the way the energy industries have been regulated was justification for the tax.

The Trade and Industry Select Committee inquiry highlighted lax price controls, excessive profits and a burden for the taxpayers caused by large job losses in the electricity and gas companies.

With all the polls pointing to a Labour election victory, there was also private satisfaction for the Labour leadership in the latest figures for the public finances. These suggest that this year's budget deficit is set to come in well below target, which would ease pressure on a Labour government.

However, Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, seized on the figures as giving the lie to Labour claims "that there's any problem with the public finances, which we have under control". Healthy tax

receipts, reflecting robust economic growth, limited public borrowing last month to £3.6 billion, less than the City had been expecting. With only one month of the present financial year to go, cumulative borrowing has totalled £14.1 billion, well below the £22.2 billion figure recorded at the same stage a year ago.

Economists are expecting public borrowing for the year to fall well below Mr Clarke's Budget forecast in November of £36.4 billion, perhaps by as much as £2 to £3 billion.

John Major was again in upbeat form during his penultimate Question Time clash with Tony Blair. After the Labour leader claimed his party would slash bureaucracy to "rebuild the NHS", the Prime Minister replied that, while Labour might have set up the health service, the Tories had built it up.

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Surgeon 'died in my arms'

Wife tells how husband was shot dead in Congo

By BILL FROST

A BRITISH surgeon died in his wife's arms after being shot at a remote police checkpoint in the Congo when he argued with armed policemen, his family disclosed yesterday.

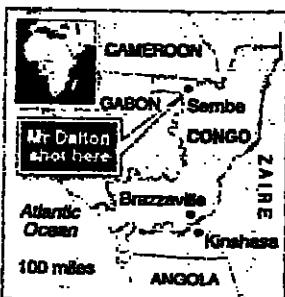
Benjamin Dalton's widow, Diana, a member of the six-strong party heading overland for South Africa, described how she called out his name as he lost consciousness. "He just opened his eyes and died in my arms," she said.

"We had reached a checkpoint at Sembe (50 miles from the border with Cameroon). An argument started — it was over nothing," she said.

"Then one or two of the policemen started to become angry and began threatening us with their guns. Benjamin grabbed me by the arms and said 'run'. I heard a number of shots and thought 'My God, they are going to kill us'."

"I saw Benjamin fall. I bent down to him and saw blood running down his back."

Mr Dalton, 29, is believed to have argued with police at the checkpoint over their demand for a bribe in return for safe onward passage. However, a Foreign Office spokesman said it was unclear what



sparked the argument or whether it was a Congolese policeman who killed Mr Dalton.

Before leaving Britain yesterday for the capital Brazzaville, the dead man's father said that his son had taken issue with a truculent official at the checkpoint. Bill Dalton, a schools inspector from Peckham in southeast London, said that his daughter-in-law had told him by telephone that a young official with a Kalashnikov was being objectionable and overbearing.

"Ben said he was going to report him. He should have known better; he has been on the road before."

Mr Dalton said that his son was chased by policemen after the argument. "Someone else, we do not know who, shot Ben through the heart," he added. He said that his son and

daughter-in-law had wanted to spend time travelling overland from London to South Africa before professional commitments and family life tied them to Britain.

It is thought that Ben Dalton, recently qualified as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, died instantly after being shot in the chest.

Mr Dalton's brother, Will, 26, said last night that the family were aghast at the stupidity of the killing. He dismissed as "unbelievable" a suggestion that the row with the policeman had been sparked by his brother.

"Ben was an experienced traveller and he was used to paying bribes. He was not silly or naive."

Before leaving for Africa, Mr Dalton had been working at the Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel, east London. He trained there and was made a houseman in 1992. He was later employed there as a general surgeon before leaving in October 1996 to travel.

Robert Ham, consultant general surgeon at the Royal London, said: "He excelled as a keen, caring and expert clinician and was a skilled and committed surgeon with his whole career in front of him."

Mr Dalton had also worked as a senior house officer in the casualty department for the Mid Essex Health Authority in the Oldchurch Hospital, Romford, Essex, from 1993 to 1995.

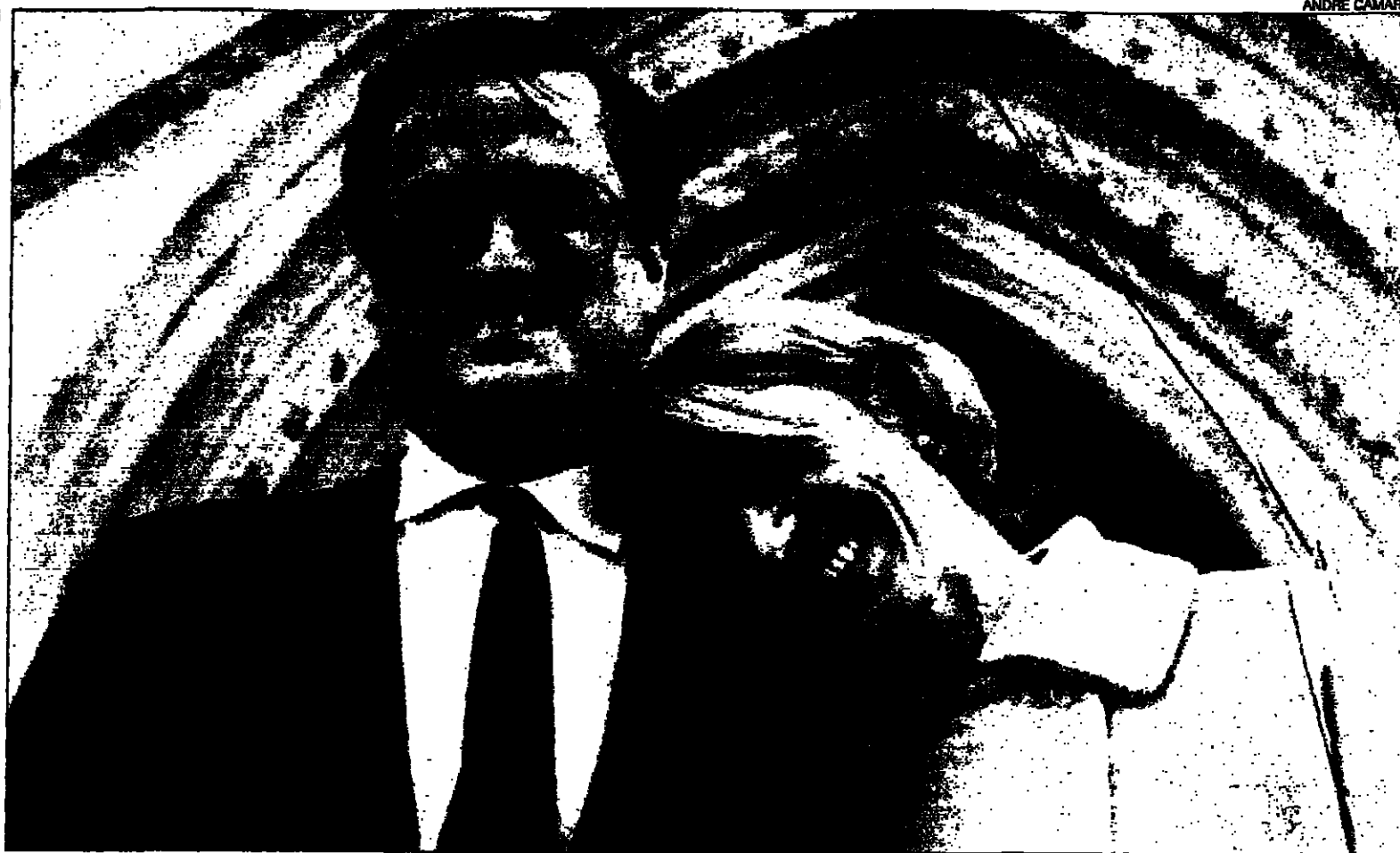
The Daltons lived in a flat in southeast London, near Tower Bridge. Tom Bingham, the manager, said that although the surgeon was "a very busy man he always had time and a good word for everyone."

The west London specialist travel firm Trailfinders said yesterday that the Daltons had taken out a worldwide insurance policy lasting for eight months.

The Foreign Office has called for a full report on Mr Dalton's death from the Congolese authorities. Britain does not have an embassy in the country so the inquiry is being co-ordinated by diplomats in Zaire.

The dead man's widow and parents were last night met by a British honorary consul in Brazzaville. It is unclear when Mr Dalton's body will be released to his family.

The Foreign Office has repeated a warning that tourists could be at risk from bandits in some areas of the Congo. While Brazzaville was "generally quiet", visitors were advised to be very careful on the streets at night.



Richard Wilmot-Smith and his wife, Jenny, outside the High Court after the case. Mr Wilmot-Smith said it was not a time for triumphalism

Telegraph faces £850,000 bill over libel

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

Paper falsely accused QC and psychic wife of brainwashing solicitor into leaving family

THE Daily Telegraph last night faced a £850,000 bill for damages plus legal costs of well over £500,000 after a jury found it had libelled a barrister and his psychic healer wife by claiming that they had brainwashed a solicitor into leaving his family.

The High Court jury awarded £250,000 to Richard Wilmot-Smith, QC, 44, a leading commercial barrister, and £100,000 to his wife, Jenny, 48. The couple had sued over an article of March 1995, entitled Dark Side of the New Age, about "a case of alternative therapy that left a happy family in tatters".

The jury also found for the solicitor, Stephen Kirby, 41, a partner in the London firm of Reynolds Porter Chamberlain, who sued the Telegraph in a separate related action.

His damages will not be assessed until today.

In a case described by George Carman, QC, for the Telegraph, as "exposing human nature in the raw", the newspaper alleged that the Wilmot-Smiths had brainwashed Mr Kirby after he sought the psychic healer's help in curing him of agonising headaches. The article stated that ten months after starting sessions with Mrs Wilmot-Smith, Mr Kirby demanded a divorce from his wife Clare, 41, whom he accused of causing his headaches.

The judge had told the jury that they faced the task of deciding whether Mrs Wilmot-Smith was acting as a "good samaritan or a wicked witch". Mrs Kirby, who is awaiting a divorce, had claimed in court that Mrs Wilmot-Smith was a charlatan. She claimed that the couple effectively held him hostage at their home in Sevenoaks, Kent.

But Mrs Wilmot-Smith claimed that she merely acted as a befriender. She denied that she had forbidden Mr Kirby to see his wife and said she had urged him to talk to her about their relationship. Her psychic husband had been used to treat hundreds of people but since then she had been unable to work.

while she sought to clear her name. She and her husband said that the article, which was next to one about cults and sects, robbed them of their integrity.

Patrick Moloney, for Mr Kirby, said that the claim that he was a "hypnotised puppet" was a serious libel of a respected professional. Mr Kirby, from Islington, north London, said that sexual difficulties in his marriage and the birth of his children had led him into three affairs that left him feeling guilty.

Mr Wilmot-Smith, a commercial lawyer and part-time judge who represented himself and his wife in the action,

said afterwards: "This case has been very much in the public eye in respect of matters which ought to have been private at all times. It's been a test for everybody, not just us but our opponents and the Kirby family. This is certainly not a time for triumphalism."

Mr Justice Roulger put a stay of execution of £100,000 on Mr Wilmot-Smith's damages and £25,000 on his wife's pending an appeal. Mr Carman said he would argue that the damages should be reduced in line with guidance laid down in the case of Elton John, whose libel award in November 1993 of £350,000 was reduced to £75,000.

A spokesman for the newspaper said: "We very much hope that those members of the Kirby family who have found themselves on opposite sides will in due course be reconciled."



Benjamin and Diana Dalton on their wedding day

Man killed after row with youths

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

A MAN who went to the aid of a disabled woman being taunted by a gang of youths was killed and beaten to death early yesterday.

Michael Stevenson, 43, who was attending a St Patrick's night celebration at a club in Langley, Berkshire, saw the youths intimidating the woman and told them to stop but was ignored. One witness said that Mr Stevenson, from Langley, headbutted one of the youths, which resulted in further threats.

When he left the club later the gang was waiting outside and attacked him. Mr Stevenson, a security guard who was separated from his wife and had a 15-year-old son, was taken to hospital in Slough but was certified dead on arrival.

Two men aged 20 and 22 from the Slough area were being held in custody last night.

Killer of bullying father walks free

By A STAFF REPORTER

A MAN who killed his bullying father after the family had been subjected to years of physical and mental abuse walked free from the Old Bailey yesterday. Malcolm McCarthy, 26, stabbed his father Terence, 53, eight times in the chest.

The court was told that Mr McCarthy had threatened to kill his wife Sylvia and daughter Megan, 23, shortly before his death. Judge Denison, QC, the Common Serjeant of London, said McCarthy had acted to protect his sister.

McCarthy admitted manslaughter on the grounds of provocation. He was given a two-year jail sentence, suspended for two years, after the judge said there were "wholly exceptional circumstances".

The court was told that Malcolm McCarthy, who was described as "a gentle giant", tried to avoid arguments with his father. On the night of the

killing the father came home drunk and abused his family. Neighbours in Deptford, southeast London, heard him shouting: "Come and get it if you want. I'm going to do you all."

The father then got a knife from his bedroom, Richard Horwell, for the prosecution, said: "Malcolm ran to the kitchen and got himself a knife. He stood in front of Megan and said to his father, 'Drop the knife.' Then he confronted his father face to face in the hallway." He immediately confessed to police.

Judge Denison said: "Plainly you were acting on a sudden impulse, motivated to start with by the entirely understandable desire to protect your sister from your father. But then you suffered what must have been a momentary but overwhelming loss of control."

Smoking gun bags £5,000 fine

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A DRUNKEN marketing executive who frightened passengers and staff at a remote railway station with his antique shotgun was fined £5,000 yesterday.

Alexander MacKinnon, 27, pointed the double-barrelled weapon, worth about £30,000, at a guard after being ordered off a Glasgow to Fort William train for smoking.

MacKinnon, of Kensington, London, had been on his way to join wealthy friends in the Highlands for a shooting party. Stirling Sheriff Court

was told that the guard asked him to leave the train, and threw his luggage after him, when he ignored repeated warnings to stop smoking.

MacKinnon said that he had removed the gun from its leather case and assembled the stock and barrel to check if it had been damaged. The rare gun had belonged to his grandfather.

MacKinnon pleaded guilty to placing people in fear and alarm at Crianlarich station, Stirling. He also admitted being drunk in charge of a

weapon. He was fined and ordered to do 200 hours' community service. Sheriff Alexander Eccles said the weapon, currently in police custody, would not be confiscated provided it was passed to another member of the family.

The court was told that MacKinnon learnt to shoot at the age of eight on his father's estate in Oxfordshire. He was not carrying ammunition at the time of the offence. His gun licence may now be revoked.

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THE ENERGY TO BREAK THROUGH

AST
COMPUTER

CDs are new weapon in supermarket price war

BY ADRIAN LEE

A PRICE war has erupted between supermarkets which are offering big discounts on Top 40 compact discs in an effort to win a larger share of the lucrative music market.

The cost of some chart albums has been cut to less than £10 as chains including Asda, Tesco and Sainsbury compete to encourage customers to buy their food and music under the same roof.

The aggressive discounting has upset traditional music outlets but has been welcomed by consumer groups. Asda is now the fourth-biggest music retailer and has seen nearly a 25 per cent rise in music sales in the past year. Tesco claims its chart CD prices are the cheapest in the country.

"Marketing opportunities on the food side are more difficult, so supermarkets are looking at other areas," an Asda spokesman said. Its biggest stores now stock more than 2,000 titles and it is introducing signing sessions where customers can hear albums before they buy.

A Tesco spokesman said: "We are taking CD sales extremely seriously. All our research shows that custom-

HOW PRICES COMPARE



Definitely Maybe, Oasis

Asda	£11.00
Tesco	£13.99
Sainsbury	£15.99
Woolworths	£14.99
Virgin	£13.49
HMV, New York	£10.85
FNAC, Paris	£15.90

Spice, the Spice Girls

Asda	£10.99
Tesco	£12.99 (red to £10.99)
Sainsbury	£12.99
Woolworths	£12.99
Virgin	£13.99
HMV, New York	£8.30
FNAC, Paris	£12.73

ers now want to buy CDs, books and videos while they are doing their food shopping." The store said yesterday that it would cut the price of the Spice Girls album *Spice* by £2 to £10.99 after learning that Asda was charging £10.99. This week Sainsbury is offering two Top 10 CDs for £20.

A source at one high street record shop said: "There is no

way they can be making money on some of these prices. The supermarkets are just going for chart stuff so ultimately it will be bad for the music industry because some smaller shops could be forced out of business." Another specialist store said: "The supermarkets are being irresponsible. It is worrying for us."

Shops such as Virgin and Our Price emphasised the

range of albums they stocked. A typical Our Price shop has 10,000 titles. A spokesman for Virgin and Our Price added: "You are not going to get specialist knowledge from a Tesco check-out girl."

Phil Evans, senior policy officer for the Consumers' Association, welcomed the price battle. "Supermarkets are to be congratulated for being so aggressive on price. The record companies and high street record shops have been allowed to get away with high prices for too long."

He said there was no evidence that supermarket price-cutting in the United States had harmed the music industry there. US prices are generally two thirds of those in Britain.

In 1994 the Monopolies and Mergers Commission cleared record companies of overcharging and collusion. The companies say the price difference in Britain and the US is comparable to other goods.

The CD trade has grown to £800 million a year since its launch in 1983. The retailer receives £4.05 from a CD costing £14.99; the record company gets £5.07; the manufacturer £1.05; producer 46p; publisher 46p; artist 98p; composer 68p; VAT £2.24.



The Restorick family stand in silence at the checkpoint where Stephen was shot dead by an IRA sniper

Family visit spot where soldier died

THE parents of Stephen Restorick, the young soldier who was shot dead by an IRA sniper in Northern Ireland last month, yesterday visited the spot where he was killed (Nicholas Watt writes).

John and Rita Restorick fought back tears as they laid flowers at the checkpoint in the village of Bessbrook, Co. Armagh, where their son died on the evening of February 12. Accompanied by relatives, including their other son, Mark, and two army officers, Mr and

Mrs Restorick walked hand-in-hand to the checkpoint where 50 floral tributes have been tied to a fence in memory of the 23-year-old lance bombardier.

After standing in silence for a few minutes, Mrs Restorick stepped forward to lay a simple spray of flowers with the message: "Dear Son and Brother. We miss you now and forever. Love Mum, Dad and Mark." The family, from Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, then walked along the road out of Bessbrook

and looked over the hillside from where the IRA sniper is believed to have fired. Later at the army base they attended a service to dedicate a memorial to their son. Forty members of the soldier's Eagle Battery from the 3rd Battalion Royal Horse Artillery joined them. The Rev John Ritson, the army chaplain, said the presence of troops in the Province allowed people to live without intimidation. "Stephen's life was lost actually fighting for the freedom of others."

Train drivers told to ignore body to prevent delays

BY A STAFF REPORTER

THE body of a young woman was left lying on a railway track for nearly four hours so that rush-hour services would not be delayed. Up to 20 train drivers were ordered to take their trains over her.

Yesterday the train drivers' union Aslef said that their members were "traumatised" by the incident on Great Eastern line between Shenfield and Southend in Essex. The union accused the rail operator of being motivated by the need to avoid penalty payments for delays.

However, Great Eastern said that the decision to keep trains running was taken in co-operation with police and Railtrack in the interests of rush-hour travellers. In the

Commons, Gwyneth Dunwoody, a Labour member of the Transport Select Committee, called for a government statement on the incident, which she described as "barbarism".

The woman had been knocked down by a train at about 5.15am on February 6. Her body was removed at about 9am.

Revealing the incident yesterday, Lew Adams the Aslef general secretary, said in the union's *Locomotive Journal*: "Some 15 to 20 drivers had the traumatic experience of being instructed to pass over her body, lying in the 4ft between the rails with just a cover thrown over it. All this was done to preserve profit and

avoid incurring penalty payments if the service was delayed.

"Just how sick and uncaring can this new regime of the privatised railway become?"

A Great Eastern spokesman said: "There was no question of any profit motive being involved in this. The decision to pass above the body was taken by ourselves, Railtrack and the police in the interests of rush-hour travellers who otherwise would have faced very severe delays. The decision was in keeping with the old British Rail rule book regulation concerning bodies on the line. Any affected drivers could have completed special forms, but so far none has been submitted."

Birmingham Six sue MP Evans

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE Birmingham Six issued a writ for libel yesterday on the Conservative MP David Evans over comments he allegedly made in an interview with sixth formers in his constituency.

Benedict Birnberg, solicitor for the six men, said they had been severely distressed by remarks that appeared to question their innocence of terrorist incidents.

He added: "We are seeking damages and an injunction preventing him from saying these things again."

Mr Birnberg said that he had written to Mr Evans earlier this month, but, when no reply was received, a writ was issued and served on Mr Evans's solicitors. The scale of

the damages to be sought would depend on Mr Evans's attitude from this point, he said.

Mr Evans, Conservative MP for Welwyn and Hatfield, North Hertfordshire, talked to pupils last month at Stanborough School in Welwyn Garden City.

During his address he reportedly criticised John Major as "vindictive and not forgiving" and labelled Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, as "dead from the neck upwards", a remark for which he later apologised.

The Birmingham Six - Gerry Hunter, Paddy Hill, Hugh Callaghan, Richard McKinnon, Billy Power and Johnny Walker - spent 17 years in prison until the Court of Appeal quashed their convictions in 1991.

Their lawyers are seeking a judicial review to finalise compensation claims for the time they spent in jail wrongly convicted of the Birmingham pub bombings.

Last week it emerged that Mr Hunter had been offered £310,000. Mr Birnberg said: "Their compensation has still not been settled, although substantial interim payments have been made."

Gasworks bomb man has case sent to Appeal Court

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE case of a petty thief serving 16 years for his part in an IRA bomb attack is to be reviewed by the Court of Appeal after new evidence was sent to the Home Office.

John Kinsella, who is in Full Sutton top-security jail near York, has served three years of a sentence imposed for storing explosives for an IRA cell that blew up the Warrington gasworks in 1993. Kinsella, 52, has protested his innocence ever since his conviction in 1994 for possession of Semtex.

He had hidden the explosives for his nephew, Denis Kinsella, and Patrick MacPhailin under a place for bonfires on a friend's allotment, for £200.

John Kinsella, from Nottingham, who was originally from Dublin and had lived in Britain for 30 years, claimed that he had not known that the bag he hid contained 7.5kg of Semtex, and guns and ammunition, which was why he buried them under a place used for bonfires. He says that he had thought the bag contained silverware.

He was originally jailed for 20 years for his part in the bomb attack but that was reduced on appeal to 16. The



John Kinsella: "did not know about Semtex"

latest hearing of the case is expected in the autumn.

Michael McCloskey, his solicitor, said yesterday that new material had been put to the Home Office relating to whether Kinsella was aware that what he hid was explosives.

Lawyers will also argue that a photograph of Kinsella's son standing in front of a plaque commemorating the death of Louis Scallion, an IRA man, shot in 1972, should not have been used at the trial as it was prejudicial.

Mr McCloskey said: "The picture had no political meaning for Mr Kinsella and was just for background to link him with the IRA. It is the kind of picture you would see in

many nationalist homes in Ireland."

Yesterday Paddy Loftus, the leader of the campaign to have the case referred to the Appeal Court said: "We have always strived to expose the truth and now we are happy that Michael Howard [the Home Secretary] has made the decision to refer this case back to the Court of Appeal and look at all the facts again. All we have asked is for the full facts of the case to be put in front of the courts. Mr Howard has facilitated this process and we are grateful."

Two years ago Kinsella's sentence was reduced on the grounds that the original term did not reflect the fact that he was unconnected with the IRA. At the appeal, a letter from MacPhailin was given as evidence. It said Kinsella had been enlisted to support the cell because he was a "petty criminal who would do anything for money."

MacPhailin, an IRA bomb-maker, is serving 35 years for leading the bombing mission that devastated Warrington gasworks. Denis Kinsella is serving 25 years. MacPhailin, 43, a researcher with a firm of lawyers in Dublin, had prepared the bombs in a flat in Nottingham where Denis Kinsella lived.

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Abusive episode lands Australian neighbour in court

BY A STAFF REPORTER

AN Australian who moved to England in search of a country idyll forgot the advice of his country's successful soap opera - that good neighbours should be good friends - and abused them instead.

Ollie Kingspark, delivered angry tirades over the garden fence, posted offensive placards complaining of racism, and kicked in the door of his rented 17th-century cottage in the hamlet of Turligh, Wiltshire.

Kingspark, 45, his wife Georgina, 43 and their two children emigrated to England in 1995 to open a lingerie shop in Bath and moved into a honey-coloured hillside property in Turligh, population 120. Within weeks they had fallen foul of the Curtis family next door after complaining about their bonfire.

Kingspark is said to have sworn at the Curtis children, disrupted their barbecue and erected a sign saying "Australian family discriminated against by racist village". When Malcolm Curtis called to try to resolve the feud, Kingspark swore and called him a "wimp and pommie" and then pushed him.

West Wiltshire magistrates were told yesterday that such was Kingspark's behaviour

during the barbecue that parents refused to allow their children to stay in tents in the garden overnight. Four months later the Kingsparks were evicted from their property but returned and kicked in the door.

Kingspark, who admitted two public order offences, criminal damage and assaulting his neighbour, was ordered to serve 101 hours' community service, pay £487 compensation for damage and £80 costs.

James Morton, for Kingspark, said the couple were desperate to return to Australia and denied ever hurling abuse at their neighbours. "Mr Kingspark incurred severe racial discrimination because he and his wife are Australian."

Kingspark, who now lives in Upper Borough Walls, Bath, Somerset, said: "I came to England seeking the country life: the idyllic type of thing me and my wife thought existed in the areas where we had been living."

"Large numbers of people didn't want us here. I came from a multicultural nation where we accept other people - but you English are the most xenophobic people I have come across."

Sir Geoffrey Lofthouse, MP

A Diary report (March 13) claimed Sir Geoffrey Lofthouse was to retire as MP for Pontefract and Castleford to make way for Alan Howarth when the general election was called. A news report on Monday

repeated the suggestion of his impending retirement. Both reports were incorrect. We accept that Sir Geoffrey has no intention of standing down, and apologise for the embarrassment he has been caused.

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Cricket boss stumped as behind is caught in beach competition

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

MEMBERS of the country's oldest first-class cricket club whose eyes strayed from *Wisden* in the off-season were surprised to find the nude figure of their beleaguered club secretary gracing the pages of *British Naturism* magazine.

On the eve of Sussex County Cricket Club's annual general meeting, Nigel Bett's naked appearance in the glossy quarterly has distracted attention from his efforts to stop the club committee being swept away by a new regime.

Mr Bett, 57, posed for his wife Barbara on a beach in Fuerteventura, Canary Islands, wearing just a strategically placed black-and-white scarf. They entered the picture in an annual *British Naturism* competition offering £100, £50 and £25 prizes for the best photograph by a reader.

Although they failed to land a prize, the picture proved ideal to illustrate an article by another naturist on the joys of strolling naked among the island's drifting sand dunes and shrub-covered hillocks.

The chances of identification were slim. Mr Bett's appearance from the rear only, was not named, and the magazine has a circulation of just 12,000 members who pay the £20 family or £16 single subscription. However, one keen-eyed reader spotted his wife Barbara's name in the



Bett: "What people do in private life is up to them"

caption and alerted the *Brighton Evening Argus* newspaper, which featured the story prominently under the headline: "Cheeky pic leaves Nigel blushing."

Mr Bett admitted all, telling the paper: "This is a picture of me. It was taken by my wife. It is a place where people can sunbathe with their clothes off. I think what people do in their private lives is up to them."

Yesterday he did not turn up for work at the club, where weightier matters were under discussion. The former Sussex fast bowler Tony Pigott is trying to overthrow the board with a motion of no confidence, which will be raised at today's meeting and formally discussed at an extraordinary general meeting on April 8.

Sussex, founded in 1839, has never won the county championship and was last runner-up in 1981. Its committee has long faced accusations of mis-handling players and the club has recently fallen into crisis with the loss of six senior cricketers during the winter.

Mr Pigott said he had no plans to raise the nude picture at either meeting: "There are more serious matters facing Sussex, such as achieving the vote of no confidence and getting new faces and new ideas on the committee."

However, one angry member despaired at yet another round of unfavourable publicity: "This is the last thing we need. He should not be entering nude pictures in magazine competitions. He is supposed to be an ambassador for Sussex County Cricket Club."

Robert Griffiths, the club's marketing director, said: "I am not aware that we have received any complaints from our members. Our primary concern is to prepare for the meeting."

County in turmoil, page 48



Pete Townshend leaving the High Court yesterday

The Who guitarist clashes with lawyer for Bowbelle

PETE TOWNSHEND, leader of The Who, was accused yesterday of exaggerating the potential of a musician whose career was destroyed by the *Marchioness* riverboat disaster in order to boost her claim for compensation (Kathryn Knight writes).

Josephine Wells, 37, has been unable to work as a saxophonist since being trapped underwater for three minutes when the pleasure cruiser collided with the sand dredger *Bowbelle* on the Thames in August 1989.

Mr Townshend, 53, told the High Court that Ms Wells was an "absolutely exceptional" musician, "the best soprano saxophone player I have ever heard in pop", and that she could have expected to earn up to £3,000 a week.

But Grahame Aldous, for the owners of the *Bowbelle*, said the guitarist's estimate of Ms Wells's earnings was the "best possible scenario". He said: "You are known as a man who gilds the lily, as a man whose statements do not always tie to the fact of the matter."

Mr Townshend replied angrily: "I may have had something of a reputation in the past but I am making this



Wells: has been unable to work since tragedy

statement under oath. I am 53 years old. I am a mature individual. I'm aware of what I'm telling you. I did not contribute to my biography under oath otherwise I would spend my life under oath.

"I am somebody with the experience of the best possible scenario. This is always a possible reality to someone who is as unique and special as is Jo."

Mr Townshend was giving evidence on the second day of a damages claim by Ms Wells against the owners of the *Marchioness* and *Bowbelle*. The court has been told that Ms Wells suffered severe

depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and had turned to alcohol since the disaster. In the 1980s she had toured with The Communards and Tears for Fears.

Mr Townshend said yesterday: "Jo really stuck in my mind. She was absolutely exceptional both technically and imaginatively. She was the best soprano saxophone player I have ever heard in pop, an unassuming figure who burst into life when she was playing."

Since working with her on a session for an album in 1986, he told Mr Justice Kay, he had been quite intimidated by how good Ms Wells was and how good she was at her. "I was constantly looking out for her. I always wanted to know what she was up to," he said.

He added that he had written 20 hit records with The Who in a career that began in 1963, and had become a good judge of musicianship.

The owners of *Marchioness* and *Bowbelle* accept liability but are contesting the amount of damages, claiming Ms Wells was burnt out before the accident and had not played professionally for 18 months. The case continues.

Film censor gives green light to Crash

BY DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A CONTROVERSIAL film which explores the sexual gratification derived from seeing bodies mutilated in car crashes will be shown in Britain. David Cronenberg's *Crash*, inspired by J.G. Ballard's novel, received the green light yesterday from the British Board of Film Censors, which awarded it an "18" certificate, without cuts.

The board went to great lengths to address fears about the effect that the violence and sexual perversion in the film could have on young, impressionable minds. James Ferman, the BBFC director, said that they had consulted a forensic psychologist "on the question of harm, particularly the link between sex and disability", and had a special screening for disabled people.

The BBFC, which has been criticised for awarding certificates to films such as *The Last Temptation of Christ*, *Reservoir Dogs*, *Natural Born Kill-*

ers and *Kids*, also sought the advice of a QC with extensive experience in prosecuting and defending obscenity cases: "Our legal adviser took the view that, rather than sympathising or identifying with the attitudes or tastes of the characters in this film, the average viewer would in the end be repelled by them, and would reject the values and sexual proclivities displayed."

The film's distributors, Columbia TriStar, said: "We are thrilled that the BBFC has finally given *Crash* the certificate. The film has opened all over the world without any cuts." An opening date has not yet been set.

CORRECTION

Juliana Selby, wife of Ralph Selby (obituary, yesterday) did not survive him, but died in 1994.

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Follow the ball...

See following pages for details

NHS under fire for 'needless' Caesareans

By JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

WOMEN are being subjected to unnecessary Caesarean and forceps deliveries which cause them injury and waste resources, a health service watchdog says today.

Surgical and medical intervention in labour varies greatly among hospitals and is often driven by non-clinical considerations such as fear of litigation or convenience, the Audit Commission says.

An investigation of maternity services by the commission, which

included a survey of more than 2,000 mothers, found that more than 80 per cent were pleased with the care they received. Each delivery costs £1,700, a total bill for the NHS of £1.1 billion a year.

Shortcomings remain, however. The commission said that expectant women were not like other patients because they were generally in good health and often had firm views about the care they wanted. Many women felt they were not given enough information about tests they underwent during pregnancy and did not have an adequate say in

decisions about their care and the delivery.

The Audit Commission said that most NHS trusts offered too many antenatal checks to women with low-risk pregnancies who could be seen more cheaply in local clinics, which the women preferred. Of the 13 NHS trusts surveyed, two thirds provided more than the nine checks recommended for first-time mothers with low-risk pregnancies, costing an extra £10 million.

One in four of the women said they had been left alone at a time during labour when they were

worried. Trusts argue that the fluctuating workload makes it difficult to ensure enough midwives are available at all times but the commission says flexible staffing is the key.

The commission found Caesarean rates varied from 11 to 18 per cent of deliveries among the trusts studied and instrumental deliveries, such as forceps, from 5 to 13 per cent. It says that Caesareans, which have doubled in the past 20 years, have "increased to a level that concerns clinicians". Many trusts make little use of the ventouse (suction) meth-

od, which causes less pain and injury to the mother than forceps.

The commission says: "The high levels of some procedures suggest they are being carried out on a routine basis... While medical factors are a major influence on levels of intervention, non-medical factors (such as fear of litigation, professional norms and convenience) play at least as great if not a greater part."

Postnatal care received the most critical comment from the mothers. A quarter said they were dissatisfied with the length of time they were

kept in hospital, most because they felt it was too long but some because they were not ready to be discharged.

Dr Jonathan Boyce, the Audit Commission's director of health studies, said: "Once the baby is out and well, hospitals are into a consumer choice area. Mothers feel they ought to be in charge but they aren't."

The Royal College of Obstetricians denied that the high Caesarean rate was due solely to non-medical factors and said it was a "more subtle" problem related to the balance of risks.

Scientists find gene of killer disease

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

THE gene responsible for a rare disease that causes rapid mental decline and death in early childhood has been located by scientists at University College London.

Batten's disease, came to prominence in 1993 when the parents of Rhys Daniels, then 2, threatened to sue the NHS over the closure of a unit where he had been promised a bone marrow transplant. The boy was subsequently given two transplants at another NHS centre but they failed to cure the disease.

The boy suffers from the late infantile form of Batten's disease, of which there are believed to be between 30 and 40 cases in Britain at any one time. The scientists analysed blood samples from families affected by the disease and identified areas on two chromosomes where the genes responsible lie.

The next step, which is to identify precisely the genes, should make possible earlier and more reliable antenatal checks, on parents known to be carriers of the disease.

Details of the discovery are given in *Human Molecular Genetics*. A member of the team, Dr Julie Sharp, believes that the findings may have wider implications for understanding mental decline. "Our research will provide further detail on the development of both the brain and the nervous system and may provide an insight into the ageing process," she said.

Rhys's father, Barry, said yesterday: "It is a huge leap forward, and now the concentration must be on finding a cure and saving the children."

Keyhole pioneer loses plea to practise

By LIN JENKINS

A PIONEER of keyhole surgery techniques who was struck off the medical register after "repeated catastrophic failure as a surgeon" failed yesterday in his attempt to resume practising.

Nicholas Siddle, 47, from Limsfield, Chertsey, Surrey, sought reinstatement at a hearing of the General Medical Council, saying that he was "ashamed that standards of care to some of my patients fell grossly below the standards the public is entitled to expect". He had suffered personal problems when his premature twins died and then endured a bitter divorce but he had sought psychiatric help and learnt to be less arrogant.

The former consultant in obstetrics and gynaecology at University College Hospital, London, was struck off in 1995 after a series of failures. Over 15 months he damaged the bowels, bladders, ureters and wombs of seven women. Three operations involved laparoscopic techniques at the vanguard of keyhole surgery.

After the case had been considered for over an hour, Dr Jeremy Lee-Potter, chairman of the committee, told Mr Siddle simply that he would not be restored to the register. He is free to re-apply at a later date.

Dorrell orders investigation into children's deaths

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

AN INQUIRY was ordered yesterday into the heart surgery service for children run by an NHS trust after a report disclosed that one surgeon had a death rate four times higher than his colleagues.

Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, announced the inquiry into the Bristol Royal Infirmary after a review published yesterday criticised the "poor" surgical performance of James Wisheart.

Mr Wisheart, former medical director of the United Bristol Hospitals Trust, which includes the infirmary, announced his retirement from the NHS on Monday, 24 hours before publication of the review. He voluntarily stopped operating last December and had resigned as medical director.

The review by independent experts of 2,500 patients operated on by the surgical team at the infirmary from 1993-95, found Mr Wisheart's perfor-

mance was "significantly poorer" than his colleagues and his "operative mortality figures" were too high.

The review recommended that he should not resume operating. It disclosed that 12.2 per cent of patients who had a coronary bypass operation performed by Mr Wisheart died within 30 days compared with the 2.6 per cent average mortality rate of his colleagues.

The review came after concern over the hospital's record on child heart surgery after it was revealed that nine of thirteen babies died when undergoing controversial "switch" operations - involving the transposition of the two main arteries to the heart - and other surgical techniques to repair heart defects at the hospital between 1990 and 1995.

Hugh Ross, chief executive of the trust, said the review had given a "clear vote of confidence" in the trust's clinical audit system and in the adult cardiac service. Its performance was "in line with the published average figures for UK cardiac surgical units as a whole".

Mr Wisheart and his colleague Janardan Dhasmana are the subject of complaints under investigation by the General Medical Council.

Mr Dorrell said that the inquiry into the trust, to examine the specialist cardiac surgical services for children from 1990 to 1995, would not begin until the GMC's inquiry was complete.



Gareth Dixon, 12, who has cerebral palsy as a result of difficulties at his birth in Hereford County Hospital, with his mother, Elaine, yesterday after he was awarded £1.47 million damages at the High Court in Birmingham.

Mental health services for young cannot cope

By JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

THE Department of Health was sharply criticised by MPs yesterday for failing to ensure proper help is provided to children and adolescents with mental health problems such as eating disorders.

The Select Committee on Health says that services for young people who are mentally ill are failing to meet the need. Mental health problems are

growing but services remain "patchy" and unable to cope.

It says the Health Department's ignorance of the number or geographical distribution of beds for those suffering from eating disorders is "unacceptable". At least 1 per cent of girls aged between 15 and 19 are severely affected and one in ten of the sufferers dies of starvation or suicide. "The NHS Executive cannot begin to design, still less to implement, a strategy to ensure an adequate regional distri-

bution of services if it does not collect data on current provision," it says.

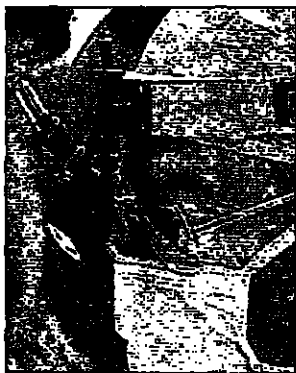
The committee was concerned that although the department supported the principle of a four-tier approach to children's mental health problems, with services ranging from general advice from family doctors to specialised in-patient treatment, it had no idea to what extent that had been implemented.

It says the Health Department, in its *Health of the Nation* strategy, should

include targets for reducing the suicide rate among young people.

However, the Health Department was congratulated for giving more prominence to issues of child and adolescent mental health in recent years and for issuing guidance to health and local authorities.

The Mental Health Foundation said that more investment in mental health services for the young was needed in order to avoid "massive problems for society in the future".



Wisheart report found high mortality figures

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Elvis soap seller rocks Memphis

**East Ender
overturns US
company's
monopoly on
musical icon**

BY EMMA WILKINS

A FORMER barrow boy yesterday won his High Court battle against America's Elvis Presley industry over the right to sell novelty soaps and trinkets to fans in Britain.

Sid Shaw, 50, who runs an Elvis Presley memorabilia business from a shop in Shore-ditch, east London, said he was delighted that his "David and Goliath" battle was over after 14 years of litigation.

Mr Justice Laddie, sitting in the Chancery Division, ruled that Elvis Presley Enterprises Incorporated (EPEI), of Memphis, Tennessee, was not entitled to register three trademarks to sell toiletry memorabilia in Britain. The judge, who liked Mr Shaw's Elvis Presley soap (E) so much that he took a bar home during the two-day hearing, ruled that EPEI did not own "in any meaningful sense the words Elvis or Elvis Presley".

After the ruling, Mr Shaw said: "Elvis is up there somewhere smiling today. This shows that the little guys can take on the big guys and still win. The bigger they are, the harder they fall."

Mr Justice Laddie is clearly an Elvis Presley fan. He should be made honorary president of the fan club."

Mr Shaw, who worked in Petticoat Lane market as a boy before reading economics at Essex University, founded his company, Elvisty Yours, in



Two for the show: Sid Shaw, left, and Leyton Sommers outside the High Court yesterday. Mr Shaw said the judge was clearly an Elvis fan

1978 and faced his first legal action from EPEI in 1983 over the rights to sell memorabilia in America. "I have had nothing but grief from these people for 14 years but now I've got British justice," he said. "They think they are omnipotent because they have all the money, but if you have guts and determination and believe in your fight, then you can win."

EPEI, which is the legal successor to Elvis Presley under American law, was yesterday considering whether

to appeal. Peter Prescott, for EPEI, had argued that when people bought souvenirs of their heroes they wanted them to come from a "genuine source".

The judge said that Presley would not be entitled to the sole rights to his name even if he were still alive. "He would not be entitled to stop a fan from naming his son, his dog or goldfish, his car or his house 'Elvis' or 'Elvis Presley', simply by reason of the fact that it was the name given to him at birth by his parents.

There is nothing akin to copyright in a name."

The judge added: "Just as Elvis Presley did not own his name so as to be able to prevent all and any uses of it by third parties, so Enterprises can have no greater rights. Similarly, Presley did not own his appearance. For example, during his life he could not prevent a fan from having a tattoo put on his chest which looked like him."

The judgment overturned a Trademark Registry ruling in February last year which

granted EPEI the trademarks Elvis, Elvis Presley, and Elvis Presley as a signature on toiletry goods in Britain.

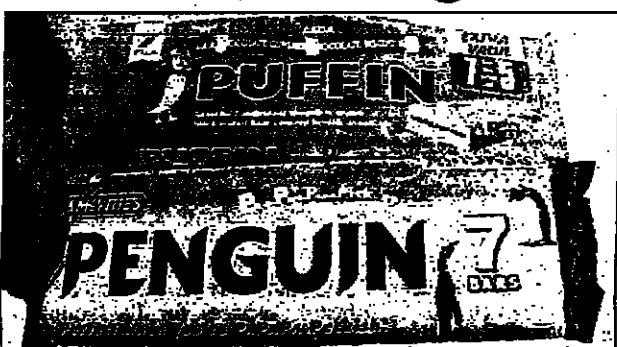
Mr Shaw was wearing his favourite Elvis Presley watch (£29.95) for the hearing. A picture of Elvis appears on the face of the "magic" watch, then disappears, every 15 seconds. It is one of 400 items, including *Are You Lonesome Tonight?* knickers, which Mr Shaw supplies to retail outlets throughout the world including Blackpool Pleasure Beach, the Elvis Presley Inn in Jerusa-

lem, and Madame Tussaud's.

Mr Shaw, who has sold goods worth £3 million between 1979 and 1991, now hopes to increase his turnover to £5 million a year. "Maybe I can float Elvisty Yours on the stock market," he said. Before returning to his shop, he stopped to embrace Leyton Sommers, 62, an Elvis Presley impersonator from Manchester who said it was his "tragedy" to look like the singer. "If you look like someone you have to give up your own life," Mr Sommers said.

Asda's wings are clipped in Penguin biscuit battle

BY DANIEL MCGRODY



Pecking order: the Puffin is too similar to the Penguin

ITS wings clipped, the Puffin limped on to the endangered species list yesterday after being defeated by the Penguin in a fight for nesting rights on shop shelves.

Their seven-day spat in the High Court had caused much amusement. Mr Justice Walker conceded yesterday, but he emphasised that a multi-million-pound business was at stake in the battle between rival chocolate biscuits. He

ruled that the supermarket chain Asda was guilty of passing off its cheaper own-brand Puffin biscuit as having something to do with United Biscuits' 60-year-old best-selling Penguin brand.

Puffins may yet take wing again as Asda intends to appeal. The judge ruled it could continue to use the brand name but would have to change its packaging.

The judge cleared Asda of infringing United Biscuits' registered trademarks — the

word Penguin and pictures of the bird — giving Puffin-lovers a partial victory. He agreed to give Asda a 35-day stay of execution pending an appeal, after hearing that the supermarket has five weeks' stock of biscuits, worth £350,000, to sell.

Thumbing through the 36-page written judgment punctuated with cartoon penguins and puffins, an Asda spokesman made it clear that even if the appeal is lost the Puffin will not vanish but will take on new plumage.

The judge admitted that he had to consult ornithological handbooks in making clear his distinction between the birds, referring to the penguin as ungainly and fat and doubting "whether the average member of the public knows much more about the puffin than it is a seabird with a multicoloured beak".

He agreed that "the cartoon puffin could be mistaken for a cartoon penguin", but added: "Had the Asda product been

called, for example, 'Bison' (to take another name from the original list of possibilities), with a cartoon picture of a brown woolly bison on the packaging, then these proceedings could not possibly succeed."

There was lengthy discussion over the wording of Penguin's famous stuttering slogan — "P... P... P... Pick up a Penguin" — as Iain Purvis, for Asda, insisted that the supermarket had never intended to imitate the style in its promotions.

The judge granted an injunction against continued passing-off by Asda after concluding that the Puffin's "packaging and get-up was deceptively similar to those of Penguin", although he did not believe this was intentional.

Outside the High Court, barristers had to step aside as two lifesize costumed figures of the rival birds shook hands for television cameras before both sides flew off to prepare to do battle again.

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Leaders to face the nation in series of screen tests

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE leaders of the three main political parties may not yet have agreed to take part in a televised debate, but they are making sure that no section of the television audience is ignored in a series of appearances on the BBC.

Last night the BBC confirmed that John Major, Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown will each be interviewed individually on *Panorama* by David Dimbleby in the run-up to the election. The three leaders will also appear on *Question Time*, which no serving Prime Minister or Leader of the Opposition has previously agreed to do.

However, Chris Capron of Capron Productions, which makes *Question Time* for the BBC, said that the format would be changed for the three special editions. Mr Major, Mr Blair and Mr Ashdown, who has been on the programme before, will appear individually, rather than on a panel, taking questions from the studio audience alone.

To try to attract first-time voters, the leaders have also

agreed to appear individually on Radio 1.

Peter Jay, the BBC's economics editor, will present a programme called *Debate for Chancellor*, which will bring Kenneth Clarke, Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor and Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, head to head. The three will also appear, in turn, on Channel 4's *Power and the People*, where they will face questioning from 300 members of the public.

Mr Clarke has agreed to do four televised debates with his rivals next month. The Chancellor is quite happy to take on both Mr Brown and Mr Bruce. Mr Brown has been less accommodating, agreeing to only two programmes. His aides say that, as Labour's campaign supremo, he is unlikely to have time to do more.

Mr Clarke has also agreed in principle to a three-way debate on BBC 1's *On the Record* on April 20, and an independent production, *Power and the People*, to be shown on Channel 4 on April 27, where the three Treasury men

will be given a slot each and questioned by the audience. Details are being finalised.

Sports and showbusiness personalities will get their chance to question the leaders in a programme presented by the comedian Dennis Pennis, *The Enormous Election with Dennis Pennis*. The interviews will be intercut with footage of Pennis walking through the Commons linking popular programmes with key issues.

Tony Hall, chief executive of news at the BBC, said that the BBC hoped to help people to make sense of the election. "In a general election, which will rely heavily on communicating via the media, particularly the electronic media, it is crucial that the electorate feels its trust in BBC values of impartiality and accuracy is justified. We pledge to get beyond the soundbite and the theatrics of party election management and reach the real issues that count with our audiences," he said.

BBC Radio 4's *Election Call* phone-in programme will offer up a politician a day to the electorate's questions,

while Radio 5 Live, in its first election, will open several lines 24 hours a day, offering listeners a chance to set the questions they want the politicians to answer.

Channel 4 has also tracked down 36 of the 1,784 people born on the day Margaret Thatcher was elected Tory leader on February 11, 1975, as part of its election coverage. Now aged 22, the group, known as *Thatcher's Children*, have only ever been aware of Conservative rule and are to vote in the general election for the first time.

They will give their views on politics and the state of the nation in a series of brief interviews, replacing programme trailers on Channel 4 in the run-up to the election. On April 24, 80 of Thatcher's Children will come together for a studio debate on the youth vote.

David Lloyd, chief commissioning editor of news and current affairs at Channel 4, said that the station hoped to eliminate the enmity that had crept into the weeks of pre-campaign posturing by politi-



Kenneth Clarke will be going *On the Record* to debate with his Labour and Liberal Democrat rivals

icians. "We have worked hard to provide a range of programmes that allow one to follow the campaign seriously, but at the same time to be properly inquisitive and sceptical about what the politicians are telling us," he said.

The satirist Rory Bremner will be offering his view in

programmes scheduled for the Saturday before and the Saturday after the election. Sir David Frost will present *1964 And All That*, in which he compares the present contest with the 1964 general election. Politicians and celebrities will take part in a quiz show, *Spot the Difference*, in which

they will be asked to explain the difference between the parties' policies.

Each weekday Channel 4 will broadcast a new *E-thought*, a short, provocative idea, expressed through words and graphics and lasting less than a minute. They are designed to provide the infor-

mation and details that many politicians are unable or unwilling to reveal, such as the fact that the pharmaceuticals bill for the NHS has doubled in the past four years.

The political chat show *Midnight Special* will return for 90 minutes from Mondays to Thursdays.

Wily political bird survives Paxo roasting

THE torrent of election television began as soon as John Major left for the Palace to ask for a dissolution on Monday morning. And little of it amounted to much more than pointless moving pictures.

The most bizarre — and expensive — images were those from the ITN helicopter as it tracked the roof of the Prime Minister's *Dairner* crawling through the traffic up the Mall. The most vacuous were yesterday's BBC *Breakfast News* interviews with each party leader which revealed nothing new at all.

But some journalism penetrated the bonhomie late on Monday night when Jeremy Paxman caught up with Tony Blair in the bland surroundings of a Gloucester hotel room. There was no breakthrough here, no blood on the fitted carpet, but Paxo at least asked the sort of questions that have been nagging away at the back of many minds, not least Labour supporters. Paxman wanted to know what difference there was now between Labour and the Tories. And was there anything, anything at all, which Tony Blair was willing to promise?

Political parties tend to renege on promises, but Blair is plainly anxious to show that he is not Neil Kinnock. Labour supporters have no need this time to hold their breath as they did when Kinnock went on TV, praying their leader would stumble to the end without inflicting too much damage on the party. But whereas Kinnock would at least attempt to hit a question for six now and then, even if he was caught out, Blair bats each ball to the earth with a thud.

Paxman was determined to ask some troublesome questions. For instance, is Tony Blair still a socialist? We'd need to start defining terms, Jeremy. Why are nine out of ten of the lowest scoring schools in the GCSE and primary league tables administered by Labour authorities? Some of these areas are the poorest in the land, Jeremy.

On the NHS, if there are no specific promises, how will we judge whether Labour has succeeded? At the moment there are people sleeping in hospital corridors, Jeremy. Will you promise then that at the end of your first term there

will not be people sleeping in corridors? It is not a promise I feel I can make, Jeremy. Blair was not flustered, but you could tell by his face that he is rarely spoken to like this.

After Paxman had established that Cedric Brown and other fat cats would not be paying more income tax after five years of Labour, the interviewer tried a trick question. Your promise about no increases in income tax, does this apply to the whole of the UK? Blair, looking perplexed, said yes. What could Jeremy be getting at? Then what about Scotland: surely you will be campaigning for a Scottish Assembly with tax-raising powers? Does that not imply more tax? No, said Blair, just because the assembly will be able to raise tax



TV WATCH

NICHOLAS WAPSHOTT

does not mean that it will actually do so. Paxman gave him the sort of look he reserves for waiters in Italian restaurants who say there is no more red wine in the cellar. Paxman dealt another couple of blows. You are the sort of politician who is brave enough to admit to having changed your mind about things, aren't you? Blair looked pleased. But surely what you need in Downing Street is someone like Mrs Thatcher who doesn't change their mind. Blair blinked in amazement.

And he blinked even more when Paxman wondered whether *The Sun* with its bare-breasted women was the right forum for Blair to use for outlining his views on Europe. I really think there are more important things to concern ourselves with, said Blair. And, to his evident relief, they ran out of time.

Lib Dems rebuked for Union Jack proposal

By POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Liberal Democrats disowned a suggestion by two of their MPs yesterday that the Union Jack, and the national anthem could be replaced if Scotland and Wales had their own parliaments.

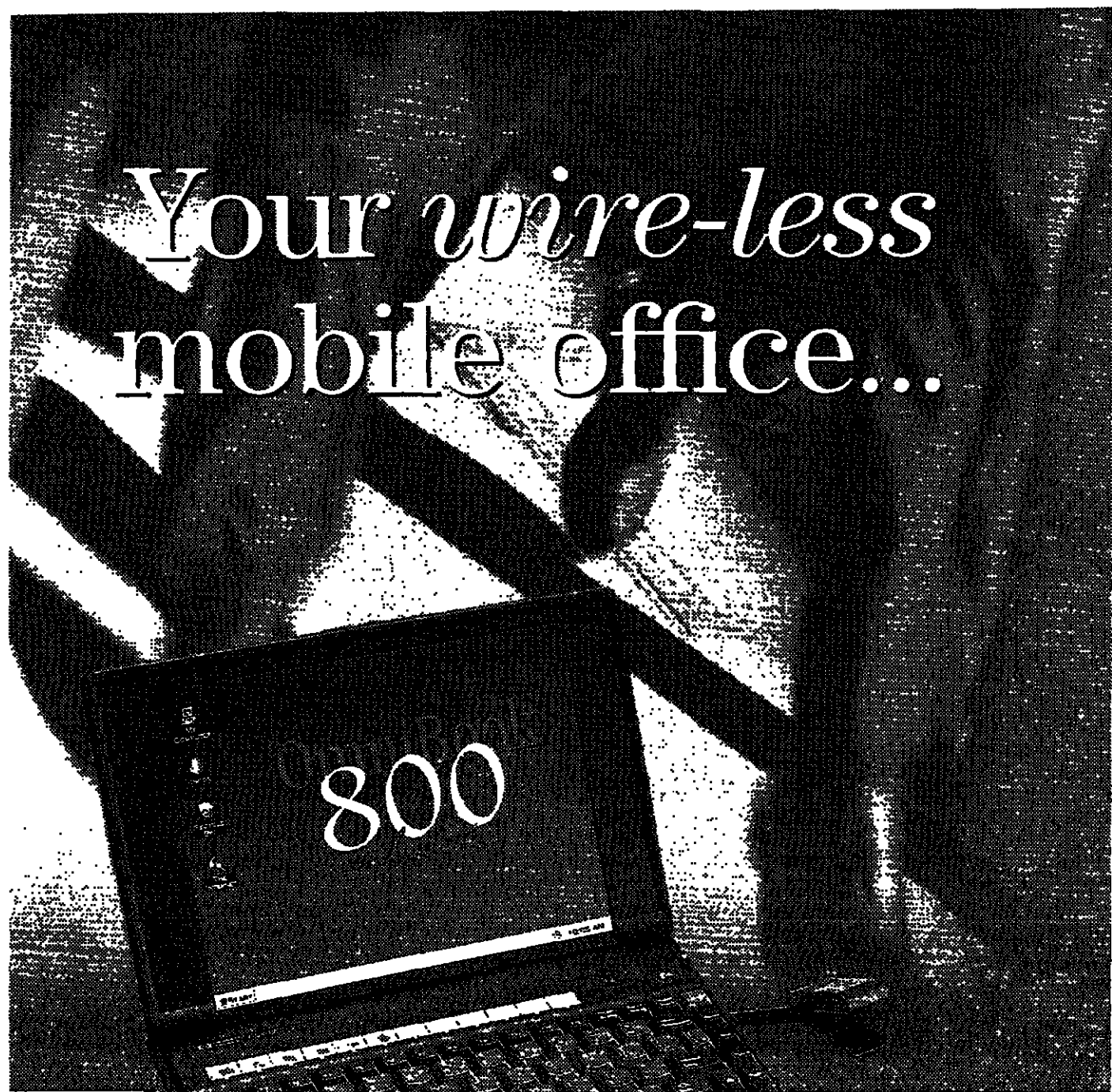
The idea was contained in a pamphlet by Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, and Ray Michie, MP for Argyll and Bute, who said the "rebirth" of a federal United Kingdom could be reinforced by the adoption of a new flag and a new anthem.

They said: "For many people, the Union Flag has been devalued in modern times by its association with the Tory party — and the

National Front. The national anthem has been similarly hijacked by the English rugby team."

A Liberal Democrat spokeswoman described the proposal as "a personal contribution" and stressed that it was not party policy. Privately, the party leadership was understood to be furious. A source said the two MPs would be told to "stick to policy".

The Tories said the Liberal Democrats would "shred Britain into a series of regions". Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, said: "No one who holds our country dear can now trust either the Liberal Democrats or their Labour partners."



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Blair should be wary of basking in The Sun

Tony Blair is becoming too fashionable. He is in danger of appearing as all things to all people. His campaign advisers are so keen to attract support and to neutralise opposition that they risk misleading voters. For them, winning the election is everything and the problems of governing can be left until later. But the price may be later disenchantment and charges of betrayal.

The smug, on Peter Mandelson's face when he praised the wisdom of *The Sun* in backing Mr Blair said it all. There are obvious campaigning reasons why Mr Mandelson would prefer *The Sun's* support, not because the paper's editorial line will shift many votes, but to avoid the mauling which Labour received on its news pages when Neil Kinnock was leader. And *The Sun's* decision matches the big swing against the Tories among its readers, as shown by the polls.

But Mr Mandelson's strongest personal belief — apart from his dedication to Labour (in its Blairite version) — is a vision of Britain's role in Europe totally opposed by *The Sun*. Mr Mandelson is, after all, a vice-chairman of the European Movement, while *The Sun* is a standard bearer of sceptic populism. But the seminal event preceding *The Sun's* declaration of support was an article by Mr Blair on Europe.

Mr Blair claimed there was nothing in the article which contradicted his previous line. But the tone was markedly different from what he would have said to either a business or a European audience. His opening paragraph — "We will have no truck with a European superstate. We will fight for Britain's interests and to keep our independence every inch of the way" — could have been written by Norman Tebbit. His pledge that he was a British patriot and would "not sell my country short" was clearly designed to appeal to a sceptic audience. He advisers cannot have been surprised, nor had any reason to complain, when the front-page story in *The Sun* on Monday said

"Blair takes hard new line on EU" and its leader said that Mr Blair's vision "borders on the Eurosceptic".

But nobody should delude themselves that Mr Blair is a sceptic. He is not. His public caution now is largely to prevent the Tories portraying Labour as weak on Europe. Nonetheless, he believes the public will support a positive British approach towards Europe.

Admittedly, a Blair government would probably not enter a single currency in the first wave if it goes ahead in January 1999. But Labour's attitude would be more supportive than any likely Tory government. And if a single currency succeeds, Labour would then back entry.

One of Mr Blair's main

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

aims in office would be to put Britain's relations with Europe on a more harmonious footing. And given Labour's likely caution on a single currency, he would want to give an early signal of a change of direction, not just by signing the social chapter but also at the Amsterdam summit of the inter-governmental conference. Labour would keep the veto on defence, tax and immigration policy, but it would support some limited extension of qualified majority voting on environmental, industrial and regional issues.

In its qualified leader yesterday, *The Sun* expressed "great reservations" about both Labour and Tory policy on Europe. Indeed, the approach that I expect a Blair government to take on Europe is likely quickly to be denounced by the sceptics, including *The Sun*. I can also see disappointment over public spending and taxes for all Gordon Brown's careful phrases now. Mr Blair should be wary of courting support from those with whom he really disagrees. He could do with a few enemies, as well as probably fair-weather friends.

PETER RIDDELL

Losing job is voters' biggest fear

By IAN MURRAY

UNEMPLOYMENT is by far the biggest fear of voters, according to a MORI poll published yesterday.

The survey, which could serve as a handy guide for politicians of the issues which

they need to confront, shows that nearly half the population (48 per cent) is anxious about being out of work, compared with under a third who worry about law and order (32 per cent), education (30 per cent) and health services (29 per cent). The economy and

Europe trail in fifth equal on just 14 per cent. Concern for the constitution, a source of bitter party division, did not feature as an issue. Drug abuse worries 8 per cent but race relations only 3 per cent in the *What's Worring Britain* survey.

Prescott tours marginal seats urging waverers to exercise their right to vote

Labour introduces its 'Mr Motivator'

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

JOHN PRESCOTT appeared yesterday in his all-action role for the general election campaign — as Labour's "Mr Motivator". Like GMTV's renowned fitness instructor, the deputy Labour leader had been dispatched on a road-show tour of Britain: his task, however, was to galvanise the public to vote Labour.

Mr Prescott, on a windswept Cornish beach, was appearing live, via satellite, at the party's London headquarters. As Tony Blair began to speak, presenting the press conference that launched Labour's election campaign, the lights dimmed and a beaming Mr Prescott materialised on a large screen.

"Before we talk about our plans to get people off welfare and into work, can I introduce you to our very own Mr Motivator, John Prescott, who is in Falmouth with some voters who are switching to Labour," the Labour leader said.

"Hallo, John," Mr Blair said. "Hallo, Tony," Mr Prescott said.

The weather is wonderful, the sun is bright, said Mr Prescott, who fortunately was not wearing Mr Motivator's multicoloured lycra training kit. "I wish I could stay here for the whole campaign but I know you won't let me, Tony," Mr Blair nodded in agreement.

Surrounded by Labour supporters, Mr Prescott was presented with a giant Cornish pasty by a local baker, Paul Barron-Hodge. "I will bring it back home," Mr Prescott declared.

"It will keep the whole Shadow Cabinet going for 40 days." Back at headquarters, Mr Blair and his frontbench team, accustomed to the delicate cuisine of north London's more fashionable restaurants, laughed nervously.

Turning to his entourage, Mr Prescott introduced Stan Gore, a local retired civil servant and former Conservative voter who is planning to support Labour on May 1.

Mr Gore, a neighbour of Sebastian Coe, the Olympic Gold winner and sitting MP for the three-way marginal of Falmouth and Camborne, said he was concerned about his young family's future. "It will be best served under a Labour administration," he said.

Mr Prescott said that Mr Gore's story was also that of thousands of other "switchers" across the country.

"So Tony, I am in Plymouth tomorrow. I will give you a ring at the same time. Cheerio."

With that, and a wave from everyone in Falmouth, Mr Prescott disappeared from the screen.

The deputy Labour leader has embarked on a 10,000-mile trip around Britain, billed as the biggest ever election tour by one politician. He will be visiting more than 65 marginal seats during the six-week campaign. In the first 48 hours, he intends to cover eight seats and 750 miles in the South West and South Wales.

"We won't stop until we've



John Prescott and Candy Atherton, Labour candidate in Falmouth, slicing into a pasty baked by Paul Barron-Hodge

taken Labour's message to every corner of Britain," Mr Prescott said. "My job is to motivate people and get the vote out to make sure we can beat the Tories."

Mr Prescott's tour will end in the northern-most marginal, Inverness, in late April. At the Beacon School in Falmouth yesterday, Mr Prescott was asked by pupils what it was like being an MP.

"It is better than working," he joked, before adding: "It is an important and privileged job. You represent people, and I have always wanted to do that."

Later, on a visit to a day-care centre in Plymouth, Mr Prescott joined children in singing a nursery rhyme with words slightly adapted for the occasion.

"Ring a ring of red roses," sang Mr Prescott as he moved in a circle with three little girls, a boy and a day care assistant. "Atishoo, atishoo,

John Major all fall down." As he sank to the grass, he sighed: "You can tell it is the election. We play this in the Commons all the time."

Simon Jenkins, page 18

Brian MacArthur, page 23

Housing policies, page 41

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Rubens House and studio remain intact and his works are commonplace. Sculptures by Rodin, Moore, Hepworth and Zadkin rub shoulder to shoulder in Middelheim Park. Tempting shops, stores and boutiques can be found everywhere. And at night the city rocks to the sound of music, laughter and gaiety. Without doubt, it's the most welcoming, interesting, fun, avant-garde place in the whole country with "more attitude

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NICHOLAS
WAPSHOTT

Call for watchdog to replace part-time governors

BBC's amateur bosses out of date, say MPs

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

MPs demanded the abolition of the BBC's Board of Governors yesterday, labelling them as part-time, well-intentioned amateurs drawn from the great and the good, and accountable to no one.

The Heritage Select Committee called unanimously for the governors' regulatory duties to be transferred to an independent watchdog, with the power to fine the BBC if its programmes fail to meet standards of taste, decency, quality, diversity and social responsibility.

The governors' custodial function of representing the interests of licence-payers would be transferred to a board of directors, headed by an executive chairman and including qualified non-executive directors from different backgrounds.

The Heritage Committee, chaired by the Labour MP Gerald Kaufman, said that the BBC could not expect to "sur-



Kaufman: Auntie needs power dressing, he said

vive, prosper and expand" if its fate was in the hands of "a group of part-time people nominated for various attributes not connected with broadcasting".

In a report titled *BBC and the Future of Broadcasting* it said: "While a board of governors consisting of nominated amateurs was, in an earlier phase of its existence, an appropriate way for the BBC to be supervised, in the new,

tough, commercial environment it no longer is. It is idle to suppose that the present board, however talented they may be as individuals — or any other group of individuals appointed in the same way and from the same pool of the great and the good — can hope to compete adequately."

The 12 board members are appointed by the Queen in Council on the advice of the Government, to protect the public interest. Their terms of office usually last five years. They include Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, former head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, the Rev Norman Drummond, former headmaster of the leading Edinburgh public school Loretto, Bill Jordan, general secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and Lord Gordon Lennox, a former Ambassador to Spain.

Mr Kaufman said: "It's about time that Auntie started power-dressing." The committee also recommended that the BBC should be allowed to

borrow money like any commercial organisation, to help it to survive media revolution.

The BBC has recently strengthened the regulatory powers of the governors, enabling them to act as a final court of appeal for viewers bringing complaints.

A BBC spokesman said that their role had been "consolidated and closely refined", adding that the BBC upheld more complaints about its programmes than the Independent Television Commission did on commercial broadcasts.

He added: "The BBC's prime role is as a public service broadcaster. It is not a plc and the governors' custodial role on behalf of the licence payers reflects this."

Mr Kaufman said that the BBC should be subjected to the same rigorous regulation as Channel 4, which can be fined by the ITC for transgressions of taste, decency and impartiality.

The committee advised against privatising Channel 4.



Damon Hill with his wife, Georgie, after receiving his OBE from the Queen at Buckingham Palace yesterday

DAMON HILL returned to Buckingham Palace yesterday to receive the insignia of the OBE almost 30 years after he watched his father, Graham, being invested with the same honour.

The reigning Formula 1 world champion, who was 7 when his father was

Hill's lap of honour

honoured in 1968 after winning the world championship for the second time, said: "The room seems smaller than I remember it. I'm very proud to be honoured by the Queen and by the country." He

days ago his Yamaha Arrows car failed to start in the Australian Grand Prix at Melbourne. "We're going to Brazil next week for the next grand prix and looking forward to doing better," he said. Sir Alec Bedser, 75, the former England cricketer, was knighted yesterday.

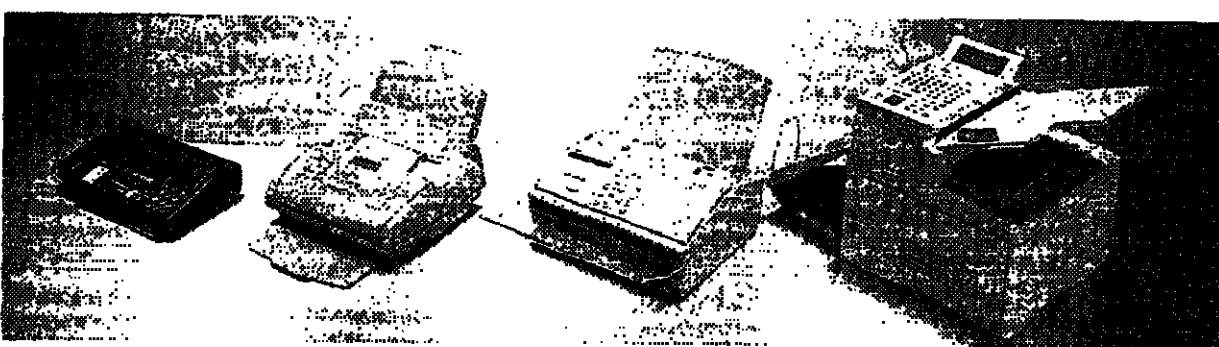
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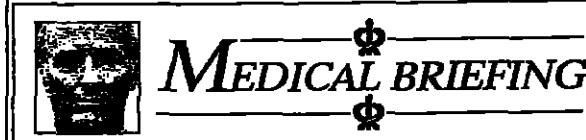
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Psychosis that can be exposed by stress



DIEGO COGOLATO is starting a six-year jail sentence after repeatedly stabbing his lover, the fashion designer Ossie Clark, to death. Cogolato also battered Mr Clark around the head with a stone, a terracotta flower vase, and a stove. The attack on Mr Clark occurred during a period when Cogolato was said to have been suffering from a transient psychotic episode.

Cogolato, 29, seemed to have led a purposeless life since completing his military service in Italy. He regularly took illicit drugs and excessive amounts of alcohol. The attack on Mr Clark was, according to Cogolato, ordered by God as he, Cogolato, was the Messiah sent to rid the world of Satan — his former lover.

Cogolato was originally described as suffering from schizophrenia. The history of delusions, the hearing of God's voice and the patient's acquiescence in the violent solution that he perceived to be God's will, are depressingly familiar to most doctors. Later this initial diagnosis was modified and he was said to be suffering from an acute psychotic episode, sometimes referred to as a brief reactive psychosis.

The features of transient psychotic episodes are that the symptoms should be of sudden origin, last for at least a few hours, and that the patient's personality should return to its pre-episode state within a month. During the Second World War, soldiers who displayed these symptoms were said to suffer from "three-day schizophrenia".

Patients who suffer a brief reactive psychosis often have pre-existing mental disease, or a personality disorder, which is exacerbated by any of the stresses that induce emotional turmoil. Unhappiness after the end of an affair or a divorce is a common precipitating cause of a reactive psychosis but other patients react equally badly to excessive workload or illness.

With treatment the majority of patients will overcome any psychotic symptoms should they recur, and there is increasing evidence that early anti-psychotic treatment can prevent later trouble.

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Growing fear of illegal immigrants and criminals replaces humanitarian response to refugees

Italian alarm as Albanian influx leads to clashes

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THE flood of Albanians fleeing across the Adriatic to southern Italy approached 10,000 yesterday, with reports of growing tension and violence between residents and immigrants.

The humanitarian response to the exodus at the weekend has given way to alarm, with officials saying they fear Italy is facing an influx of illegal immigrants and criminals more than a refugee crisis.

The Italian authorities appear to have been caught napping, despite weeks of warnings in the Italian press of a repetition of the influx of 1991, when more than 40,000 fled to Italy after Communism collapsed in Albania.

Officials said it was "practically impossible" to establish the new refugees' identities, carry out full health checks and weed out criminal elements. "I fear the immigrants include Albanian mafiosi who have escaped from jail, and will link up with the Italian Mafia and give them arms," said Pier Luigi Vigna, the chief anti-Mafia prosecutor. "Albania has become the only country in the world with no prisoners." The Italian Cabinet

will meet today to review the crisis.

The separatist Northern League, which takes a strong anti-immigrant stand, said it was forming "vigilante patrols" to keep Albanians out of northern towns. Marco Formentini, the Northern League Mayor of Milan, said Italy was "raising the white flag in the face of an invasion of Albanian delinquents". These people are profiting from disorder to enter our country.

Police in Bari, Brindisi, Otranto and other ports who only a few days ago were seen carrying Albanian babies to safety, have now begun arresting the crews of fishing boats carrying refugees on charges

of transporting illegal immigrants and firearms. Ports and resorts further north such as Pescara, Ravenna and Jesolo, near Venice, were "closed" to immigrants.

Caritas, the Catholic aid agency whose volunteers are bearing the brunt of the relief effort, complained that there were not enough police to keep order in the makeshift refugee camps. The head of Caritas, Mgr Luigi Di Liegro, said Italy and Europe had "sinned by omission" in failing to prevent the Albanian economy from falling into the hands of the Mafia.

In Bari there were ugly scenes as local people demonstrated at refugee centres in schools and church halls, in some cases clashing with the immigrants. "These people bring drugs, prostitution and skin diseases with them," one said.

Simone Di Cagno, Abbruzzese, the Mayor of Bari, was angered by a visit to one centre. "We give them a shower, clean clothes and bedding, and all they do is vandalise things and complain about the food," he said.

In a further sign of disarray, Paolo Foresti, the Italian Ambassador in Tirana—who has played a key role in seeking a diplomatic solution—was abruptly replaced by Alfredo



Matteo Corderella, another senior diplomat. Italian coastguards said that because of calmer seas and clear moonlit nights, thousands more Albanians were making the 40-mile trip across the Adriatic in leaking and dangerously overcrowded vessels.

The Italian Government declared that it was providing only "temporary sanctuary", saying yesterday that many of the Albanians would add to the country's crime statistics. Brindisi now contains nearly all of the ramshackle Albanian navy: rusting and battered minesweepers, coastal patrol vessels, torpedo boats and launches.

Perilous voyage to 'a better life'

In Durres harbour and then pushed off into the current, using lumber and metal sheeting as oars to propel it. The enterprise seemed so risky that about half of the people on board disembarked at the mouth of the harbour, fearing it might sink. The rest, numbering about a hundred, drifted out into the Adriatic to what they hope will be a better life

abroad. Several smaller craft, also without power, were reported to have drifted out of Durres harbour as well yesterday. On Monday the US Navy rescued 20 Albanians who had been adrift in the Adriatic in a powerless boat for five days, three of them without food or water. (Reuters)

Iran school attacked

BY JAMES PETTIFER

HEAVILY armed men leading a crowd of adolescents wielding pickaxes and shovels destroyed much of the Iranian Government's agricultural school on the outskirts of Tirana last night.

This impressive modern complex, near the airport, was the showpiece of the Tehran Government's quiet economic and diplomatic offensive in Albania. The cost of the damage is estimated by Albanian employees at about \$15 million (£950,000). The school was opened by President Berisha and a leading Iranian cleric three years ago.

Albania, where 60 per cent of the population is Muslim,

was a natural target for Iranian aid and missionary work after years of religious persecution under communism. Strong American opposition has, however, prevented the opening of high-level diplomatic relations.

In response the Iranians have concentrated on economic links, with frequent trade exhibitions in Albania, subsidised exports of Iranian goods, and this large and well-run programme concentrating on educating farmers, particularly in the rearing of cattle.

The Tehran approach in Albania has avoided the ostentatious mosque-building programmes of Kuwait and Abu Dhabi.

Red Cross backs Tirana appeal for aid

Anthony Loyd reports from Tirana on the desperate state of the civilian population as food stocks fall to critical levels



ALBANIA's new Prime Minister, Bashkim Fino, issued an urgent appeal for humanitarian aid yesterday after food stocks fell to critical levels.

The International Committee of the Red Cross backed his appeal and called for funds to finance emergency aid.

The head of the European Union delegation in the capital, Tirana, refused to rule out recommending that foreign troops should be sent to safeguard the delivery of emergency supplies. "We are not looking at military intervention or a big force," Jan de Marchant et D'Ansembourg, a Dutch diplomat, said yesterday. "But we need aid to be brought in for those who need

it, and we cannot provide humanitarian assistance without first stabilising the environment: to do that might require a real European commitment here."

Mr D'Ansembourg spoke after separate meetings with President Berisha, Mr Fino and Albanian officials. His fact-finding delegation arrived in Tirana on Monday night and leaves today to submit a

report to EU foreign ministers.

The delegation is divided into three groups, assessing security aspects of any potential aid mission as well as financial and humanitarian requirements.

"We have four military men concentrating on that aspect of affairs," Mr D'Ansembourg said. His delegation was sent after an EU meeting in The

Netherlands last weekend refused Albania's request for a peacekeeping force to help to restore order. However, that refusal did not preclude the deployment of a UN-style "protection" force for the delivery of aid.

Mr Fino repeated his request for outside assistance to restore order. "We need humanitarian aid as soon as possible, mainly food and medicine to prevent further aggravation of the situation," state television quoted him as saying on Monday.

"European police units are necessary to distribute this aid... and contribute to restoring order and rebuilding our police. Reorganising public

and financial institutions would be another part of [the] assistance."

Although the overall level of violence has calmed over the past three days after police succeeded in holding the centre of Tirana, the state had been left fragmented into well armed fiefdoms of conflicting loyalty.

The North is held largely by paramilitary and police units loyal to Mr Berisha. It is unclear whether the President or the Prime Minister holds the centre of Tirana, so confused is the situation, but most of the suburbs are loyal to the new Government. The South is held by rebel groups hostile to the President.

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Republican fundraising obsession slows wheels of government to a crawl



Clinton: foreign policy an enticing refuge

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX
IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON intended to spend yesterday with his physiotherapist, dubbed "the torture team", as well as preparing for today's trip to Helsinki to meet President Yeltsin of Russia.

Instead, from his wheelchair in the White House, he grappled with a different, unexpected, ordeal: the urgent search for a new head of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Anthony Lake's decision to withdraw his nomination, making him the first casualty of this round of Senate confirmation hearings, shows how the campaign finance

ANALYSIS

row has brought government to a standstill. The Administration is weeks behind schedule in making key appointments as officials scour their offices for memorandums demanded by congressional committees. The Republican-controlled Congress, obsessed with the document trail, has passed no significant legislation in three months.

Little wonder that to Mr Clinton foreign policy seems an enticing refuge, although the Helsinki summit reflects one of the causes of the Washington deadlock: the United States lacks a real threat,

abroad or at home. Suggestions that China tried to influence November's elections have partly satisfied the craving for a new enemy. But members of Congress have found it easiest to fill the policy vacuum with attacks on each other, bringing an emphatic end to the bipartisan honeymoon and jeopardising Mr Clinton's hopes of a worthwhile second term.

As Mr Lake put it on Monday night: "Washington has gone haywire." A career diplomat with a thin-lipped smile, 1950s felt hat, horn-rimmed glasses and beige mackintosh, Mr Lake's bitterness at the abrupt end to his ascent is understandable.

Mr Lake's record at the National Security Council was not faultless, but he is right to claim that seeking high office has become perilous. The Senate investigates every corner of a nominee's life, a scrutiny many find unacceptable even if there is no illegally hired nanny in the background to disqualify them.

Mr Lake's move also shows how the fundraising row is clogging the machinery of government. His confirmation hearings were prolonged largely because the committee used the questions to investigate White House campaign tactics rather than his suitability for the job.

Meanwhile, the State Department has delayed nominating am-

bassadors and assistant secretaries while it checks whether any have connections, particularly with Asia, that could seem suspicious.

The White House has postponed a study of gambling, for fear of charges that Mr Clinton was influenced by gambling donations. Above all, policy towards China has been complicated; the charges, denied by Peking, will dominate Vice-President Al Gore's forthcoming trip to China.

The investigations may turn up extensive evidence of illegality, but so far the clamour has far outpaced the findings. The dispute is a reminder of how two obstacles increasingly threaten to cripple

American political life: the difficulty of winning office, and of getting anything done once in the job. Those constraints would be less if there were more sense of urgency among congressional Republicans or Democrats about pushing through a legislative agenda. The US is not short of problems to solve.

But the economic prosperity that swept Mr Clinton to a second term, as well as the end of the Cold War, have removed the pressure which would have forced Congress and the White House to reach across their divisions. Many besides Mr Lake will feel bitter if the lesson of the 105th Congress is that America can be governed only in crisis.

Clinton candidate for CIA chief quits over Senate 'circus'

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S controversial fundraising antics claimed a member of his inner circle yesterday when Anthony Lake withdrew his nomination as Director of the CIA, maintaining he was the victim of partisan politics.

Mr Lake, the President's former National Security Adviser and senior negotiator on Ireland, told Mr Clinton he was no longer prepared to act as a "dancing bear in a political circus" of Senate confirmation hearings.

His departure, which comes three months after being nominated, left the President hobbled both physically and politically on the eve of his flight to the Helsinki summit with President Yeltsin. Mr Clinton had hoped to spend the day resting after an operation to his knee last week, but instead was forced to consider swift replacements for the CIA position.

Mr Lake was the fourth nominee for the CIA job during Mr Clinton's tenure at the White House and the second to have withdrawn from the role, which also includes board chairman of the nation's 12 other intelligence services and controller of the purse strings for a \$30 billion (£19 billion) budget.

The resignation came after a damaging report which alleged that the Democrats had ignored the President's national security aides and even deployed secret information from the CIA to ensure White House access last year for a Lebanese businessman wanted by Interpol.

Nancy Soderberg, then Mr Lake's deputy at the National Security Council, had warned the Democratic National Committee that Roger Tamraz was not to be allowed into the

White House for donor events to Mr Clinton's re-election.

But Don Fowler, chairman of the committee, tried to overturn her recommendation and is believed to have arranged for a secret CIA dossier on Mr Tamraz to be sent to national security aides.

Mr Tamraz attended four events with Mr Clinton, including a June screening of the film *Independence Day*, and

the national security team about China's attempts to influence the election, that Mr Lake was said by the White House to have had no knowledge of intelligence matters in his own department.

But he had also drawn criticism for not informing Capitol Hill of a tacit White House decision in 1994 to approve Iran's arming of the Bosnian Muslims. He had also faced lengthy questioning over personal finances and a political past which included a protest resignation from the Nixon Administration over the invasion of Cambodia.

The latest bombshell over Mr Tamraz had given the Senate intelligence committee enough leverage to delay a vote on Mr Lake's nomination until mid-April, bringing further damage to an intelligence agency racked by moles.

In a letter to Mr Clinton, Mr Lake said he was the victim of a "brutal" confirmation process. He had lost his patience, he said, come close to losing his dignity, and was not prepared to face a nomination process with no end.

"I have believed all my life in public service. I still do. But Washington has gone haywire," he said. "I hope that people of all political views beyond our city will demand that Washington give priority to policy over partisanship, to governing over 'gotcha'."

Those being considered for the vacant post last night included George Tenet, the acting CIA Director, Jamie Gorelick, the Deputy Attorney-General, Frank Wisner, the US Ambassador to India, and Sam Nunn, the former senator who is a military and intelligence specialist.

It was the second time, including an FBI warning to

I still believe in public service. But Washington has gone haywire

contributed at least \$177,000 to the Democrats in 1995 and 1996. In Lebanon, he is wanted for questioning regarding \$200 million allegedly missing from the Bank al-Mashrek.

The CIA and congressional investigators are treating the claims as "extremely serious". Senate Republicans had planned to make them an issue at hearings into Mr Lake's confirmation.

It was the second time, including an FBI warning to



Linda Finch prepares to take off from Oakland on the first leg of her round-the-world flight. The total journey will cover 26,000 nautical miles

Texan millionairess takes off in flight path of pioneering pilot

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A TEXAN millionairess has set off from California in a vintage aircraft in an attempt to recreate and complete Amelia Earhart's ill-fated attempt to fly round the world 60 years ago.

Hundreds of schoolchildren cheered as Linda Finch took off in her painstakingly restored 1935 Lockheed Electra 10E on Monday from the same airfield in Oakland from which Earhart left on St Patrick's Day in 1937. Ms Finch, 46, hopes to complete the round-the-world flight planned by Miss Earhart, who earned international fame when she became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic in 1932.

Earhart originally hoped to set a

record for circling the globe by travelling west, but she crashed in Hawaii. She had her plane repaired for a second attempt heading east, but disappeared on July 2, 1937, while flying a leg from Lae, New Guinea, to Howland Island in the Pacific Ocean. In the absence of any wreckage, there is unending speculation about Earhart's disappearance. It has even been suggested she was on a spying mission against the Japanese.

Others have flown Earhart's route, but nobody has ever done it in a twin-engine Electra similar to Earhart's aircraft. Ms Finch, who has made a fortune running nursing homes, bought the plane

in boxes and spent two years rebuilding it, borrowing parts from an Electra on display at an aerospace museum in Oakland.

Unlike Earhart, Ms Finch will benefit from a global-positioning satellite receiver and will use VHF radio to help with landings and take-offs. She will also have an escort plane carrying a film crew to chronicle her endeavour.

Flying at a maximum speed of 200mph, her flight will cover 26,000 nautical miles and take her to 20 countries before she returns to Oakland in July. She plans to drop a wreath on Howland Island, near where Earhart is presumed to have gone down, to commemorate the great aviator.



Earhart disappeared over Pacific in 1937

Missing Renoir retrieved from US

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE Spencer-Churchill family has retrieved Renoir's *Study for the Apple Gatherers* from a leading American collector after accusing a London dealer of selling it to him without permission.

A lawyer representing Jeanne Spencer-Churchill, whose millionaire husband is a cousin of the Duke of Marlborough, picked up the painting at the weekend from the Connecticut home of Richard Thune, a noted collector of 18th and 19th-century French paintings.

The undated oil of two women picking apples in a field, valued at up to \$2 million (£1.26 million), is now being shipped back to London by Sotheby's. Mrs Spencer-Churchill, 42, herself an accomplished artist, inherited the painting from her grandfa-

ther, Paul Maze, who was Sir Winston Churchill's painting tutor.

Mr Maze's father was a close friend of Renoir as well as other famous French artists including Monet, Manet and Braque. He had bought the oil in the 1930s from the artist's son, Jean Renoir, the film director.

Mrs Spencer-Churchill's husband, Robert, the only son of the late Lord Ivor Spencer-Churchill, inherited a fortune as a child from his rich American grandmother, Consuelo Vanderbilt Balsan. The couple have two sons — Jack, 13, and Ivor, 11.

The Renoir hung for a time on a wall of the Spencer-Churchill's home in London and, from 1991 until 1994, was put on show at the Leeds City Art Gallery. Mrs Spencer-

Churchill then offered to lend the painting to the Museum of Wales in Cardiff and sought the help of William Joll, a family friend and former director of Agnew's art gallery.

According to a High Court writ, Mr Joll told the family that he had arranged for the painting to be taken to the Lefevre Gallery in Mayfair to be viewed by museum officials. The museum decided not to take up the offer and Mr Joll is said to have moved it to another, unnamed London gallery.

Mrs Spencer-Churchill only learnt that the painting was missing when she called the Museum of Wales to check on it while moving house in January. In court papers, she says she believes that Mr Joll sold the painting to Mr Thune for the bargain price of

\$250,000 without informing her.

Mr Thune agreed to return the painting to the family because of the threat of further legal action in the American courts. But he was said yesterday to be distressed by the case and seeking reimbursement of the purchase price from Mr Joll.

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Zaireans welcome rebel liberators in captured city

THEY are wearing white strips of cloth around their heads in this jungle city which last weekend became the greatest prize to fall to rebels advancing across Zaire. The people say they will not remove the bandanas until the arrival of the rebel leader, Laurent Kabila, who is expected in coming days.

The headbands symbolise victory and liberation, said Paul Marcel Volakonga, a librarian at the local university, said. "The fighters who freed us from dictatorship are not rebels, they are liberators."

Apart from a few looted shops in the town centre, there is little evidence of the fall of Kisangani to Mr Kabila's Democratic Alliance of Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire. The Zairean Army and its mercenary backers had been expected to resist the rebel assault but instead they fled in panic.

The bulk of the army crossed the Zaire River in boats, residents said. Hundreds of French, Serb, Moroccan and other mercenaries, who had been drafted in to protect the city, either escaped by aircraft westwards or disappeared into the jungle with the Zairean soldiers.

At the military airport an aircraft, its tyres shot out, bears testimony to a gun battle between the retreating mercenaries and soldiers desperate to prevent their allies' flight by air.

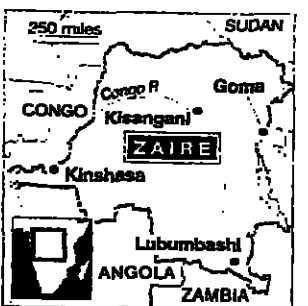
"Now all is calm," Mr Volakonga said. "The curfew is over and we can move about the city again. The liberators behave well, they don't beat us as if we were snakes which is what the army did. The mercenaries were cruel, they would just shoot people in cold blood. Their motto was 'No Pity'."

Residents said they were waiting for the establishment of a new administration in

Kisangani residents are urging the fighters who freed them from dictatorship to push on for the capital, Kinshasa, reports David Orr

Kisangani, Zaire's third largest city and the farthest point west of the rebels' advance. A decaying city in the depths of the equatorial rainforest, Kisangani has, in this virtually roadless country, a symbolic significance: perched on the banks of the mighty Zaire River, it stands as the gateway to more than 1,000 miles of navigable waterway leading to Kinshasa, the capital.

Kisangani was the redoubt chosen by the Government to launch its counter-offensive



and beat back the rebels. Zairean Army commanders boasted it could not be taken. Its fall, diplomats in the region said, will send shockwaves all the way to Kinshasa, where the population grows daily more fearful of turmoil. There have been rumours in the capital of an imminent coup by the military, which has been humiliated in the five months since the rebel insurgency began.

The collapse of the country is matched by the decline in the health of President Mobutu. News that the cancer-stricken leader has again

been hospitalised in France came within days of the fall of Kisangani. Speculation is growing that the President will die in exile and that his corrupt regime will self-destruct in the coming days or weeks.

"It would be good if Mobutu dies," Evariste Lombe, a Kisangani medical student, said. "But it would be even better if he lives to witness his own downfall."

The rebels now control a fifth of this sprawling Central African nation. Residents of Kisangani hope that the rebel force will press its military advantage and take all of the country rather than enter into peace talks that are being initiated by the international community.

"The rebels are strict but they seem fair," Jerry Selenke, an American missionary whose house was looted by the ill-disciplined army before they fled, said. "There's law and order, it's much easier working with the new guys than with the old regime."

Yesterday, Joseph Kabila, son of the rebel movement's leader and a regional commander, gave the residents in Kisangani 48 hours to return all goods looted from abandoned aid agency stores and depots. More than 400 tonnes of material — food, medicine and electrical equipment — was looted by civilians and the retreating army. If they do not comply, they have been told, they will be severely punished. A large amount of the stolen goods have already been returned.

Defector flies to Philippines

BY JAMES PRINGLE

THE most senior official to defect from North Korea, Hwang Jang Yop, arrived yesterday in the Philippines from Beijing, where he had sought asylum five weeks ago, fearing he was about to be purged by political enemies.

He left the South Korean consulate, where he had been sheltering, in a ruse involving three vans making off in different directions to thwart any assassination attempt. Earlier in the saga, North Korean agents had surrounded the consulate and were assumed still to have at least some operatives in the area.

The night-time escape thwarted television teams which had maintained a vigil outside the consulate in one of Beijing's diplomatic compounds since shortly after Mr Hwang, an ideologue who invented North Korea's philosophy of *Juche*, or self-reliance, walked out of the North Korean Embassy in the Chinese capital on February 12 and took a taxi to the South Korean consulate.

The Chinese were furious when the South Koreans broke the news in a high-profile manner and Beijing tried to give as little promi-

nence to the incident as possible so as not to embarrass North Korea, an old ally and comrade-in-arms during the Korean War.

Officials in the Philippines said that Mr Hwang flew to Clark airbase, north of Manila, and the South Korean Foreign Ministry said he was "safe, under South Korean control, in a foreign country". China said that the affair had been resolved through negotiations. Envoys believe he will fly on to Seoul after a decent interval, agreed at Beijing's behest so as to allow Pyongyang to save some face.



Orthodox Jews on the windswept Har Homa hillside as surveyors move in

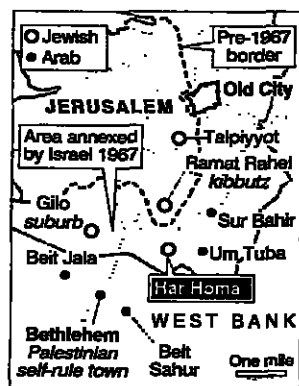
Israeli guns guard start of work on settlement

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

HAMAS, the Islamic Resistance Movement, last night called for a new Palestinian intifada after Israel defied world opinion and dispatched bulldozers in a military-style operation to start work on Har Homa, a big settlement in annexed east Jerusalem.

Israeli forces were put on an emergency footing after the Government of Benjamin Netanyahu was told by security chiefs that Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, had given the go-ahead for violent protests among the 2.2 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. "We have received very hard intelligence that the Palestinian Authority has prepared the ground for violence," the Prime Minister said. "I demand they reverse these decisions immediately."

The Palestinian side must choose, do we want terror or do we want peace?" As hundreds of troops in full battle gear guarded the earthmoving equipment and police scuffled with Israeli Arabs at the site, declared a "closed military zone", Israeli radio



national police chief, said that police were preparing "for the ground to get hot", with officials concerned that Friday's Muslim prayers could spark an explosion.

Faisal Husseini, Mr Arafat's chief Jerusalem representative, was one of those Palestinians whose rain-soaked tent protest at the contested pine-covered hillside was wrongfooted as work began a safe distance away. He said at the camp site opposite Har Homa — which the Arabs call Jabal Abu Ghneim — that the groundbreaking, ordered by Mr Netanyahu after a 45-minute session with his military chiefs, left the Palestinians only one option — "to go down to the streets". The Hamas call for a "continuous intifada" was issued from Jordan by Ibrahim Ghoshe, its spokesman.

London: Malcolm Rifkind yesterday sharply condemned the construction, saying it would do nothing but harm to the peace process (Michael Binyon writes). In a personal statement, the Foreign Secretary said the settlement went against the spirit of the Oslo agreement.

Hundreds of Israeli police went to east Jerusalem in anticipation of rioting and all police and army leave was cancelled. Assaf Hefetz, the

British 'advisers' detained in Papua

BY NOEL PASCOE IN PORT MORESBY AND MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH former special forces soldiers were among 40 mercenaries still being held in Papua New Guinea yesterday, despite an order by Sir Julius Chan, the Prime Minister, to release them.

The former British and South African soldiers were caught up in a stand-off between Sir Julius, who hired the foreign military "advisers" to train the country's army to put down a nine-year-old secessionist guerrilla war, and Brigadier-General Jerry Singirok, the Defence Force commander, who has been sacked for trying to expel the mercenaries.

The Foreign Office said it had reports that two or three Britons were among those detained. However, the Foreign Office has criticised the Papua New Guinea Government for using mercenaries to train its military. A Foreign Office source said the secessionist dispute with the Bougainville Revolutionary Army rebels could not be resolved through military action.

The mercenaries are being held at a remote camp near the northern coastal town of Wewak. The foreign "advisers" had been hired after an agreement signed on January 31 between Papua New Guinea and Sandline International, a London-based security consultancy company. Sandline, whose chief executive is Lieutenant-Colonel Tim Spicer, formerly of the Scots Guards, said yesterday that General Singirok had been involved in the deal.

The general's address to the nation, which condemned the use of foreign military advisers and called for the resignation of Sir Julius, contradicted his earlier position. Sandline said. In a statement, the company said: "We are astounded that he would unilaterally seek to destabilise the democratically elected Government with his wildly inaccurate, misleading and untrue claims."

Sandline said General Singirok had consistently supported the contractual terms of the deal. The firm added that it had contacted Sir Julius and had confirmed that its advisory team would remain in the country "as long as we are required".

Most of the mercenaries have been provided by Executive Outcomes, a firm based in Pretoria, South Africa, subcontracted by Sandline. Sir Julius said yesterday that he was in "absolute control" of the situation and accused Brigadier-General Singirok of "gross insubordination bordering on treason". He could face arrest, he said.

WORLD SUMMARY

German troops in race row

Bonn: Ten German soldiers, earmarked for Bosnia service, were arrested yesterday after attacking an Italian and two Turks with baseball bats and knives (Roger Boyes writes). They were drunk but serious enough to pull on masks and shout racist slogans.

The assault embarrassed an army command basking in media praise. Having helped to move 103 people out of Albania, its soldiers had been dubbed "German heroes" for the first time in years.

Separatist's news break

Venice: Police started an investigation into how state television's main news broadcast was interrupted by a man urging people in northeast Italy to overthrow the Government. The separatist managed to block out the sound on RAI Uno's evening news bulletin in the Veneto region twice in about 20 minutes and broadcast his own recorded message. (Reuter)

Poverty wage for UN maid

Geneva: The most senior UN human rights official paid his Peruvian maid a poverty level wage for two-and-a-half years, (Peter Capella writes). José Ayala Lasso, who has resigned as High Commissioner for Human Rights to become Ecuador's Foreign Minister, paid the maid \$800 (£506) a month for working 11½ hours a day on a six-day week.

Cuban drugs general freed

Miami: Cuba has released from prison a former general jailed for 30 years in 1989 for his part in a drug trafficking scandal that shocked Cuba's Communist Party (David Adams writes). Relatives said Brigadier General Patricio de la Guardia, 58, was told he was free soon after hearing of the death of his father, 97.

Amnesty drive on refugees

London: There are 15 million refugees in the world and another 20 million displaced persons forced from their homes but within their national borders. Amnesty International said as it launched a global campaign, condemning the "callous disregard" of governments. (AFP)

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When size is everything



JANE SHILLING
GETS DRESSED

I am not, in general, much given to conspiracy theories, but I have lately begun to wonder about men and their clothes. I mean, if you say to a girl "What size are you", she will instantly reply "ten", or "twelve" or whatever. If the conversation has taken a really technical turn, someone might admit to having a size twelve top half and a size fourteen bottom, or to being a size eight at Jaeger and a size twelve at Miss Selfridge, where the margins are tighter and the clientele skinnier, but that is as complicated as it gets.

All this makes shopping a matter of beautiful simplicity. You wander into a shop, pick up This Season's Prettiest Ruffle-front Frock in cerise georgette overprinted with lime trifolds, take it into the fitting-room and—hey presto!—it fits. Or possibly not. In which case you try again with the next size up until it does. Really, a child could do it.

In fact with children it is even easier, since all you have to do is remember how old Tarquin is, then purchase the trousers on the hanger that says Age Five. And if they turn out to be six inches too large in every direction, you just roll up the legs until his feet appear and, ignoring his protests, reef in the extra yardage around the waist with one of those useful elastic belts.

Chaps, on the other hand, before they can complete the purchase of a suit, need to have mastered a kind of Venn diagram containing such outlandish measurements as Inside Leg, and Shoulder to Waist Ratio, and Circumference of Thumb. And of course the whole business of measuring all these body parts is so stressful (not to mention, as the years advance, humiliating) that they naturally can't face doing it very often.

So what happens (and this is where the conspiracy theory comes in) is that, gazing fondly at one's Significant Other, one suddenly notices that the shirt he is wearing

(which you never really cared for even when it was new, back in 1986) is so badly frayed that the collar appears to have a half-inch fringe. Furthermore, his corduroys have on each thigh a huge bald patch, which makes them look as though they are suffering from mange.

"I can't stand it any more," you say. "You have GOT to get some new clothes." Oh darling, he says shifty, hellish busy all week. I know, why don't you pop out and buy yourself that jumper you've been on about, and pick me up a couple of pairs of strides while you're at it?

Thus it is that you find yourself in the Posh Gents Outfitters, immobilised like a rabbit before a serpent by Darren the Slick Operator, who has every intention of selling you hundreds of quids' worth of clothes, but not before he has given you a really hard time.

"What size is he, then," says Darren. "Big bloke, is he? My sort of build? Or is he more the streamlined type? Like Gary over there. 'Ere, Gazza, look sharp. Come and give the little lady some assistance."

Oh crikey, you say, I suppose he's sort of medium, really. Have you got a shirt in medium, do you think? "Medium," says Darren. "Harharharharhar. That's a good one, that is. Now, you just tell me his neck measurement and we'll see what we can do. Long in the arm, is he? Or normal?"

Oh, really, it is more than flesh and blood can bear. Observing that you thought you were buying a shirt for a man, not an orang-utan, you sweep out, arriving home extremely flustered to a great deal of eye-rolling from your husband, who says that since you have obviously totally alienated the staff of the only place where he could contemplate purchasing an outfit, most unfortunately the whole business will have to wait until next year at least...

COMPETITION THE TIMES

WIN A £36,000 MERCEDES

and help to
raise money for
Comic Relief



To support the Red Nose Day campaign McLaren International, and their close friends the Spice Girls, have linked up with The Times to offer you the chance to win a £36,000 Mercedes SLK. There are runners-up prizes of trips to Edinburgh on Virgin CrossCountry and flights to Paris with Air France. Over five previous Red Nose Days, Comic Relief has raised just over £112m to help projects in Africa and the UK.



PHONE 0800 885 599

HOW TO ENTER Call our hotline, above, before midnight on Saturday March 22 with the answer to this question:

How much money has Comic Relief raised in its five previous Red Nose Days?

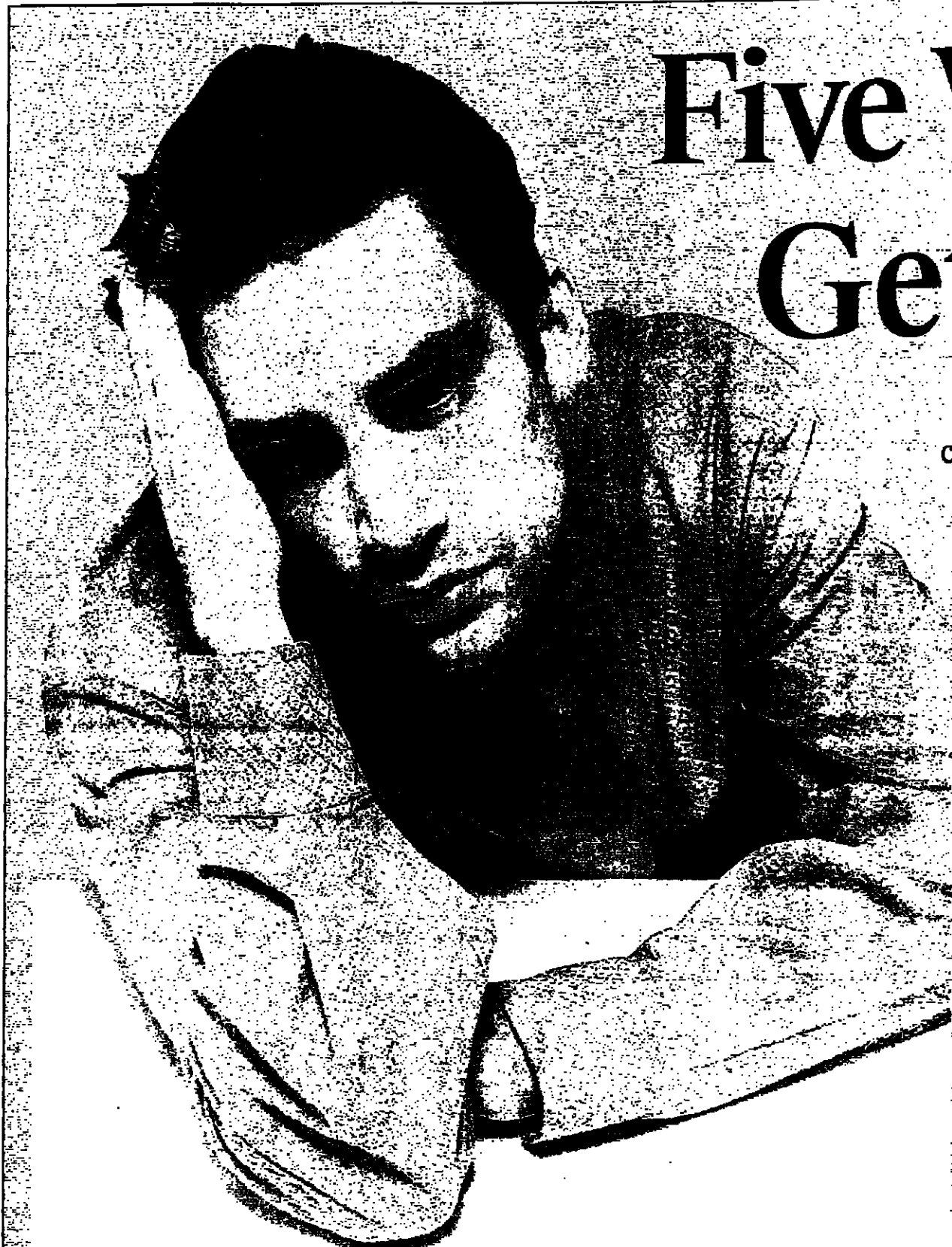
a) £100 million b) £112 million c) £150 million

All proceeds from the line will go to Comic Relief. Normal TNL competition rules apply.

CHANGING TIMES

Five Ways to Get Shirty

From clashing prints to identical colours, Grace Bradberry chooses new shirt and tie combinations



Orange patterned shirt, £39, and knit tie, £49, by Paul Smith, 41/43 Floral Street, London WC2

Quail shirt, £26, and Glogoe tie, £55, from Morris Michale



Shirt, £26, and tie, £55, by Oswald Boettgen, 9 Vigo Street W1



Shirt, £110, and tie, £55, by Richard James, 31 Savile Row, W1



Shirt, £27, and silk tie, £10, from Marks & Spencer

Photographer: KARL GRANT; Stylist: DEBORAH BRETT; Grooming: PASCAL MARIN; Model: FIL HANLEY at So Damn Tuff

Tied-up for the election

WHEN the suit is dull and dark, and the shirt bland, a man's only means of self-expression is his tie. And for the electorate, it is the only sartorial guide to the personalities that lurk beneath.

How unfortunate then that the leaders of the two main parties, whose policies are already distressingly similar, should also have plumped for such similar neckwear.

Geometric patterns currently have a particular allure for British politicians. Even Dafydd Wigley, President of Plaid Cymru, and Alex Salmond, leader of the Scottish National Party, could not resist wearing little squares all over their ties — and in doing so, they revealed a surprising cultural unity with their English counterparts.

The chances are that all these men consider that they are wearing an "interesting" tie. They doubtless rejected a plain one on the ground that it would look dull. But they were not about to go all swirly and psychedelic on the first day of the general election campaign.

Politicians from all parties are choosing the same neckwear



John Major and Tony Blair favour geometric patterns



Oh no, leave the LSD trip tie to some other poor fool. Likewise the large lemons and winking pinks that pass for humour in large City banks.

A previous generation, would have opted for stripes. But these now come with too

much social baggage. They smack either of Essex-man aspirations or of old school ties.

John Major, the boy from Brixton, can scarcely wear one to mount the soapbox, and Tony Blair is seeking to play

down his public school background.

Mary Spillane, the image consultant behind Colour Me Beautiful, says that a geometric foulard, the name for a repeated pattern, is really the only option: "If you look at what's around, then geometric designs, flowers and stripes are the most prevalent. A politician might as well shoot himself in the foot as wear flowers."

"At the last election, Labour went for great big personality ties — and it was difficult to concentrate on what they were saying."

Closer inspection reveals tiny differences between the two leaders: Mr Blair's squares wobble slightly at the edges, Mr Major's don't.

But who knows, as the election approaches, the politicians may reveal their true colours. Mr Blair might come out in Prada tone-on-tone — red-on-red perhaps, or even blue-on-blue.

GRACE BRADBERRY
Style Editor



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A woman simply can't win in court

Why Tania Clayton had to be a victim to prove her case

Every time a woman wins a sexual harassment case, the air grows thick with gibes of wimp and whinger — and that's just from the female commentators.

I think it would be difficult for anyone, however, even the most hardboiled of vinegar-lipped observers, to put up a convincing argument against Tania Clayton, the fire officer who has just won (in an out-of-court settlement) £200,000 to compensate her for five years of bullying and victimisation at work. Her colleagues were undoubtedly wrong to behave as they did; she was undoubtedly right to try to do something about it.

And yet... and yet... five years? One is not supposed to ask of battered wives why

of a world gone seriously awry in matters of reason and comportment, but it is hard to see, by comparison, what Paula Jones hopes to gain (except for a great deal of money) by suing Bill Clinton for sexual harassment.

This is a very different case. Jones claims Clinton made improper advances in a hotel room in 1991, as a consequence of which she was left feeling "mentally raped". While there are people being physically raped I am afraid I haven't got much time for such self-pitying, attention-seeking whines.

What is more, the self-styled victim is now claiming that all she wants is to have her reputation restored. This is an odd one. If her allegations of assault are genuine — or if even if they are just upheld — then what loss of reputation can she deem there to be? And if they are unfounded and the grievance she chose to publicise by doing the rounds of the chat-show circuit are groundless, then any damage to her reputation is of her own doing.

Not that things are any clearer over here concerning such matters. The proliferation of so-called date-rape cases is intensely worrying. Rape is an awful offence, and I don't see how sex with a fellow student you don't much like comes into that category. There is still the problem of reputation; I understand how it could ruin an innocent man's life if he is accused of rape. Despite a court's verdict, the idea that there's no smoke without fire prevails. We all know that.

I know there is a very good argument against allowing the defendant the same anonymity guaranteed to the plaintiff in such cases. I do see that it goes against the principles of democratic justice to have secret, closed trials. If you start with rape cases, why not murder? Before you know it, we're living in Idi Amin-land.

But I can't help thinking that if many more weak, unconvincing so-called date rape cases are brought, it will be not only innocent men who lose their reputation, but even more innocent women, too. For not only will the real victims of rape be increasingly treated with suspicion and contempt, but so will women in general.

The law deems someone's reputation to have been harmed if the offence is such as to "expose him [our legal system clings to 'him'] to hatred, ridicule or contempt, cause him to be shunned or avoided, or lowered him in the estimation of right-thinking people". How long will it be before defendants in rape cases which are not upheld start suing for loss of reputation?



Nigella Lawson

they stay to be battered — as if the question itself blames them for the battering. But why so? Anyway, it is not my intention to hold Mrs Clayton accountable for the behavior of her bully-boy colleagues, but I still cannot imagine what made her put up with it for so long.

I understand that the need to earn a living makes keeping the job you have the dominant imperative. Even more, I assume that, as with women who are attacked at home, those who are bullied at work receive such a blow to their self-esteem that they don't have the confidence to make a stand.

Unfortunately, though, whatever the psychological explanation, the fact that she did put up with it for so long means that the intimidation tactics of her colleagues did, in effect, work: if they victimised her, it is now indeed the case that her status, in the eyes of the world, is that of victim. In order to win, she has had to prove that. How demoralising to have to win justice at the cost of your reputation.

I can see, though, that it would have been more of a blow if Mrs Clayton hadn't won: then it would have seemed as if the taunts were OK.

I know that it is often just a cheap trick to cite the American way as evidence



Tim Parks: "Never does the world seem so freshly painted, so brightly enamelled, so new, for heaven's sake, as after the best sex. But, alas, it may be full of new complications, too"

When temptation strikes

If Brahma is a more endearing creator than Jehovah, it is because he wasn't pleased with what he had made. He found the world dull and dusty. Death was the answer, suggested Siva. Living for ever, people were bored. A time limit would galvanise, give dignity. But in that case some way of replacing the population would have to be found.

Brahma brought together a few trusted fellows and explained what was required. The pleasure took them by surprise. What was that for? To put a fresh shine on the world, they were told. Otherwise it might get dusty again.

I'm always taken aback when people talk about the eroticism of food and drink, of sunbathing and massage. This is mere sensuality. Or avoiding the issue. No experience even remotely compares with true Eros, with long and lavish love-making. It is understandable that people should imagine it was tacked on to creation afterwards, so extravagant is the pleasure it brings, so far beyond what is necessary. Never does the world seem so freshly painted, so brightly enamelled, so new, for heaven's sake, as after the best sex. But, alas, it may be full of new complications, too. A lesser authority than Brahma would have issued a health warning.

Over billiards and beer, a friend is explaining why he is leaving his wife and two children. He's playing with unusual speed and precision. His eyes are brighter than the beer could account for. And the girl is 23, he explains. French. So intelligent. "Intelligently pert breasts?" I inquire. "Perceptively warm thighs?"

MEN ONLY

The road to erotic passion can end in confusion, says Tim Parks

He laughs. He is deliciously proud, confused, unhappy. "I feel I was never really in love with my wife," he says.

Eroticism paints out the past. In this sense it is the most potent myth-making and myth-destroying power we have. How those first encounters are told and retold, cherished and savoured over and over again. How solid and irreplaceable they begin to seem. I did this, you said that. When your hand first... Beneath the superstructure of domestic economy, in-laws, even children, it is on this bedrock that marriage rests. But only once? Is it never to happen again? Suddenly solid ground is quicksand. As soon as I'm in the door, I feel suffocated. I married too

young." Thus Franco, potting the black. "I never experienced real passion." Before *la jeune fille très intelligente*, he means. He is smoking, too, this evening. I have never seen him smoke before. "I feel I will die if I go home." I ask him if he wants more children. He doesn't. "Perhaps it's all a terrible mistake," he says, "but at least I will have had this passion." Should I tell him that when we first met he had seemed very passionate about his wife?

Women. Another Indian myth — sexist, if you wish to be offended — has it that when the gods became scared of a man, scared of his developing spiritual powers, they would send him a woman. Or they might send Indra to seduce his wife and make him jealous. In either case, the turbulent feelings would disperse the power he had accumulated. So Franco, whose expertise once took him round all the capitals of Europe, now finds his life in pieces. Lawyers, quarrels, returns, departures. Then more women, too. For if marriage has a way of declining into dusty routine, myth-making, too, can lapse into nawdry chronicle.

Eroticism has this in common with an addictive drug: that there is a coercive element to its pleasure with which part of us is in complicity, and part not. Thus, men have always tried to enjoy eroticism without being destroyed by it.

Societies, religions can be defined in the way they deal with this conundrum. Polygamy, monogamy with repression, monogamy with affairs, monogamy with prostitutes, serial monogamy. Not to mention individual solutions of great ingenuity, or desperation: Victor Hugo with the door knocked through the wall of his office, to let in a girl each afternoon. Auden's flair for finding call-boys in every town. Picasso, who simply refused when wife and mistress demanded that he choose between them.

But perhaps the thing to remember when you wake up with a life full of fresh paint and tortuous complications is that eroticism wasn't invented for you, nor merely for the survival of the species, perhaps, but for a divinity's entertainment. Nothing gener-

ates so many opportunities for titillation and *Schadenfreude* as eroticism. Which is why it lies at the centre of so much narrative. How the gods thronged the balconies of heaven to see the consequences of Helen's betrayal! On the borders between mythology and history, that wily survivor Odysseus was the

first who learnt to trick the gods. And perhaps his smartest trick of all was that of lashing himself to the mast before the Sirens came within earshot. There are those, of course, who are happy to stand at the railings, even scan the horizon. Otherwise, choose your mast, find the ropes that suit you: sport, workaholicism,

celibacy with prayerbook and bell... But the kindest and toughest ropes of all are probably to be found in some suburban semi-detached with rowdy children and a woman who never allows the dust to settle for too long.

Tim Parks's novel *Europa* is published by Secker & Warburg on April 14, 1999.

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Is Kosovo the Albanian apocalypse?

Timothy Garton Ash visits a province waiting to erupt

As Albania has descended into mayhem, Nato planners have agonised over the possibility of violence spilling into neighbouring Kosovo, where nearly two million Albanians live under Serb rule.

No one I spoke to in the dusty, battered and depressed province of Kosovo last week suggested that an Albanian insurrection was imminent. Even if large quantities of small arms were to be smuggled in from the plundered arsenals of Albania, the heavily armed and professionally trained Serb army could wreak terrible vengeance. "You see," both Serbs and Albanians told me, with chilling matter-of-factness, "there are some 700 purely Albanian villages. So the people there could all be killed."

Yet everyone speaks of the longer-term possibility of war — and the seeming impossibility of any peaceful solution. Kosovo has traditionally been regarded by Serbs as the mystical heartland of their great medieval state and national identity, their "Jerusalem". (How much of this is myth and how much reality we shall learn next year with the publication of a history of Kosovo by Noel Malcolm, author of *Bosnia: A Short History*.) In the 1980s, it was an autonomous province in the former Yugoslavia, with a largely Albanian population and administration. Many of the remaining Serbs were leaving, often being forced out.

Ten years ago, Slobodan Milosevic came to Kosovo and told the local Serbs "No one should dare to beat you!" With this battle-cry, he mounted the Serb nationalist horse and rode it — ably assisted by politicians of other nationalities, and especially by the Croat Franjo Tudjman, to the bloody destruction of Yugoslavia. Kosovo itself was placed under direct Serb administration. The Kosovar Albanians responded by declaring an independent Republic of Kosovo and holding extraordinary underground elections in which a majority voted for the "Democratic League of Kosovo". Its leader, Ibrahim Rugova, became "President of the Republic".

His headquarters is a large hut in the middle of a dusty bus-station, full of picture-book hawkers and spitters. At the door I was inconspicuously met by the "head of protocol" who ushered me in to see "the President". Mr Rugova told me about the underground state: the 18,000 schoolteachers it funds from unofficial taxes, which the Kosovar Albanians pay in addition to the official Serb ones; the independent university, the attempt at healthcare through an organisation named after Mother Teresa. (Later, I visited a state school divided by an internal Berlin Wall, so that Serb and Albanian children should never meet.) Mr Rugova's immediate demand is merely for an alleviation of the repression. While the Serb police dare not touch him, they regularly harass low-level activists. He

insists on Gandhi-esque peaceful means, and has explicitly cautioned his followers against following the example of armed insurrection across the border. But on the central goal he is quite unyielding: self-determination for his people, statehood for the republic which he claims already exists.

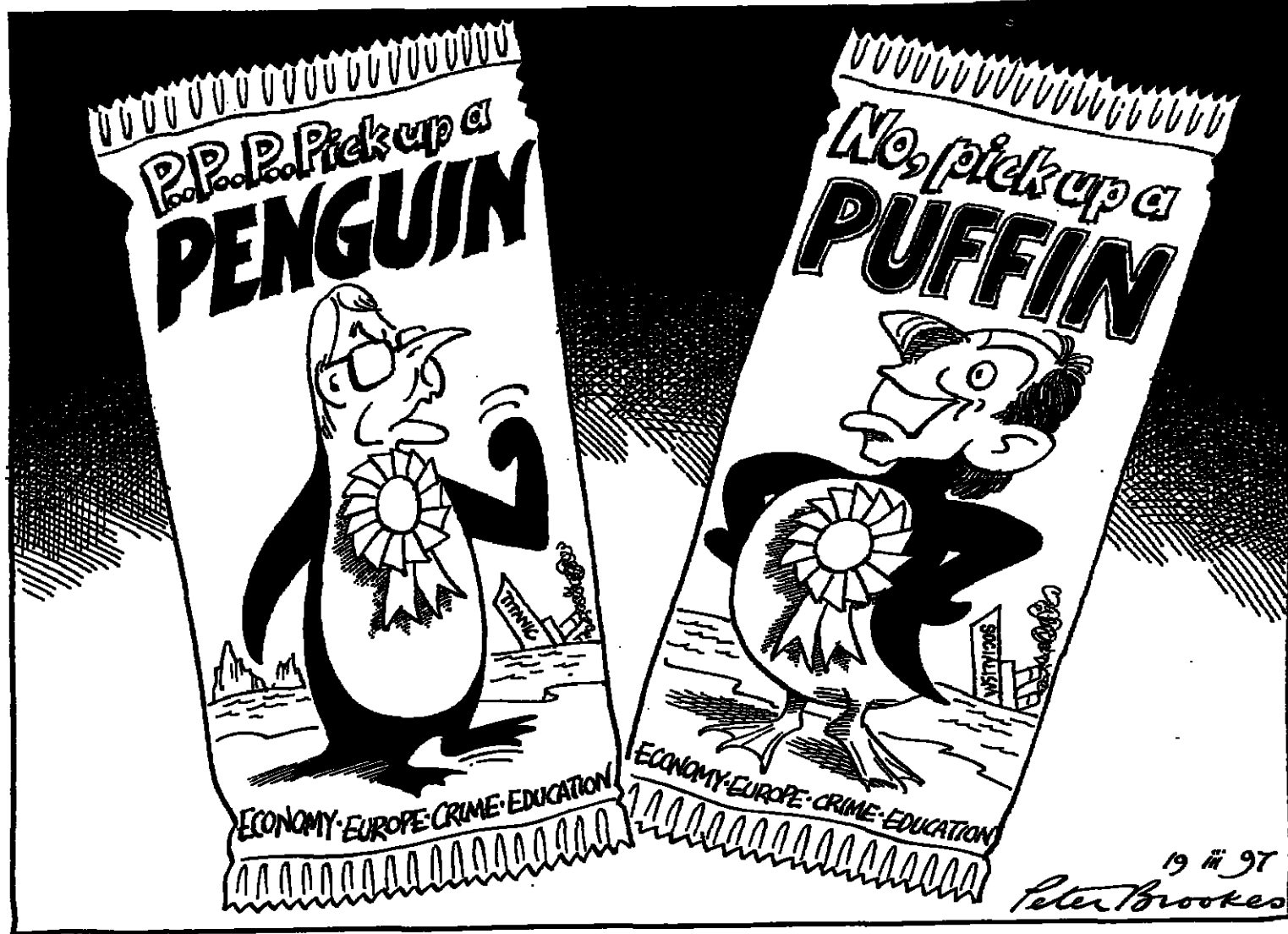
His main rival, Adem Demaci, sometimes called "the Albanian Mandela" on account of his 28 years in prison, sat opposite me on a chair in his new party headquarters, and, Gandhi-like, pulled up his legs into the lotus position. He might be prepared to settle for slightly less than Rugova: a republic within a very loose confederation with Serbia and Montenegro. But he wants more dramatic protest actions to achieve it. He has called on his followers to imitate the student and opposition demonstrators in Belgrade.

That is the Kosovar Albanian mainstream. But in the past year there have also been a number of terrorist attacks, with responsibility claimed by a Kosovo Liberation Army. Are these the work of impatient young radicals, like the young Palestinians in Gaza? Or — for this is the Balkans — are they actually secretly encouraged by the Serbian leader? Back in Belgrade, even sober political observers speculate that a cornered Milosevic, faced with total economic collapse and massive popular calls for his resignation, might in desperation play the Kosovo card, provoking a terrorist assault or armed rising which he could then heroically suppress.

This may be far-fetched. But Kosovo remains a terrible problem for the diverse opposition parties in the Zajedno ("Together") coalition, which have won power in many cities and are gearing up for Serbian republican elections later this year. Not only are they far from together on this issue, but even those who privately want to concede most of the Kosovar Albanian demands feel that to do so publicly would be political suicide in a country still suffused with national self-pity.

Some have suggested a peaceful partition of Kosovo, giving Serbia its holy places, the mineral resources and main areas of Serb settlement, but these are not compactly contiguous with the mother country. How the line could be drawn without bloodshed and large transfers of population, as in Bosnia, no one has yet explained.

Pathetically, people still look to the West, to "Europe" and above all to America for a solution. An international conference has been proposed, but who would now put their faith in the so-called "international community" and its endless mediators and conferences? I left with a horrible feeling that here, too, the lines may be drawn first in blood. And the Yugoslav tragedy that began in Kosovo may yet end in Kosovo, in this faraway province of which we still know nothing.



PACKAGING RULED TO BE TOO SIMILAR (Court case)

It's the voters wot win it

Politicians pay court to editors, but how much power do papers wield?

So it's all over bar the shouting. It's *The Sun* wot wins it. As yesterday, it's *The Sun* wot's won it. In 1995 Tony Blair flew to see Rupert Murdoch in Australia to audition as Prime Minister. The great man approved. Blessing was conferred. New Labour, old Commonwealth. No deals on media ownership, of course. Nothing so crude. These are honourable men who do not nod, nor even wink. Their treaties are fashioned on the wind and written of air, and are the closer for it. Yesterday the mighty organ swung left. Mr Blair's press officer, Alastair Campbell, achieved his ambition, to see a Labour *Sun* rising over Wapping. He has earned his peerage and the chairmanship of Burnley Football Club. The election is over.

Up to a point, your lordship. The 1970 election was the last in which *The Sun* came out for Labour, just after Mr Murdoch bought the paper. The nation defied the pollsters and voted Tory. I doubt if the electorate will be so indisposed this time. But Mr Murdoch told Mr Blair two years ago that if their flirtation were ever consummated "we will end up making love like two porcupines, very carefully". If I were Mr Blair I might prefer *The Sun* the way it was.

Yet news that this one paper had come out for Labour sent the BBC into a frenzy of excitement. The *Today* programme could not conceal its glee. If a foreign proprietor had taken a Labour icon and turned it Tory, there would have been howls of outrage about foreign interference in British politics, not least from the Labour Party. This time, I heard not a peep about proprietorial interference from Labour or the BBC. We can only marvel at the infinite mutability of human affairs.

There is nothing like a general election to plunge the upmarket media into an obsession with working-class opinion. Pundits traipse the provinces which they know only as constituency names. So-called "ordinary people" are dragged like Fidelio's prisoners into the political daylight. They are granted a soundbite of their choice before being herded back in the slammer.

At such moments, the world becomes fascinated by the editorial juices of *The Sun*. Most other papers are known territory, pro-Labour or pro-Tory. *The Sun* is a riddle inside an enigma. Its image of eccentric independence comes not just from offshore ownership and vast circula-

tion. The paper is deemed to enjoy a hotline to the mental processes of the British proletariat, albeit mostly through the latter's nether regions.

Such vast readership must bespeak a vaster power. Since *The Sun*'s own mental processes are often hard to fathom, politicians invest them with the wisdom of Delphos. They wait outside the temple, on steps incarnadine with ministerial sacrifice, while proprietor and Editor enter into conclave. The fate of the nation is held to depend on the outcome.

The rising status of the media is a much-noted feature of British poli-

tics. Every memoir testifies to this. The principal reason is the Prime Minister's sensitivity to press criticism. None of his predecessors has been quite so skin-thinned. His remark, yesterday dismissing *The Sun*'s move as less important than the media thinks brought a hollow laugh from editors accustomed to Mr Major's telephone calls complaining at the most trivial slight and pleading for kinder treatment. An Editor of *The Sun* once replied by telling Mr Major that a large bucket of turd would be on his desk next morning.

The Prime Minister is like an actor who starts each day by re-reading his worst reviews. Political comment is by its nature not flattering to politicians. For Mr Major to start work with such ritual self-abasement must be debilitating. Yet he is addicted to the punishment and reference to it peppers his off-the-cuff utterances. His staff cannot rid him of the habit.

The reason is that Mr Major has isolated himself from most of the traditional conduits of Downing Street peer-group review. He has all but disbanded his party in local government. Central Office organisation and research department are pale shadows of their old selves. Elder statesmen are not consulted, and unsympathetic backbenchers are treated as enemies, possibly lunatics. Mr Major is left only with the press. It offers the one independent running commentary on the Cab-

inet's performance. The Tory press is treated as a stand-alone proxy for Tory supporters in the country. Harassed ministers accord it ridiculous over-importance, in part because their boss does. After the 1992 victory, Lord McAlpine of West Green heaped credit on the tabloids. He said they won the election for the Tories, and if politicians "in their hour of victory are tempted to believe otherwise they are in very real trouble next time". This is bizarre. Just as Downing Street expects the whips to deliver the Commons majority, so it seems to expect the Tory press to deliver the nation.

Tabloid front pages are portrayed as the Eatenwill of our age. This is hokey. The search for the cause of the Tories' narrow 1992 election victory has yielded a mountain of research, on the gro-

tesque premiss that credit could not possibly go to Mr Major himself. The principal evidence pointing to *The Sun* was marshalled by Brian MacArthur and Martin Upton, drawn from MORI data gathered in the last week of the campaign. It showed a 4 per cent switch to the Tories among *Sun* readers, ostensibly in response to its strident pro-Tory campaign, compared with lesser swings for *Express* and *Mail* readers. *Sun* readers formed almost half the electorate in key marginals such as Basildon. Hence the extra swing was taken as highly significant. On this basis, the paper could be claimed as moving 200,000 votes from Labour to Tory.

This view has not gone unchallenged. In *Labour's Last Chance*, John Curtice and Holli Semetko pulled a large panel of voters during the campaign. They found a small swing from Labour to the Liberal Democrats and a smaller one to the Conservatives. But this did not occur among readers of pro-Tory tabloids, who, if anything, swung away from the Tories, a finding that appears to conflict with MORI. "There was no evidence from our panel," wrote the authors, "that there was any relationship between vote-switching during

the election campaign and the partisanship of a voter's newspaper." Curtice and Semetko pointed out that newspaper readers are now notoriously inclined to shift papers in response to non-political inducements, a fact well-known to editors. Who knows what voting pattern they take with them. Nor can we really tell how many voters might switch at election time to papers that better accord with their own views.

Newspapers love to be credited with far-seeing wisdom. Yet when *The Sun* was accused of exerting huge influence in 1992, it answered that this was "an insult to the 14 million people who voted Conservative". Such disclaimers should be treated like those of television producers denying that their sex and violence films could possibly influence viewers. If those who run the media really believe they have no influence over their consumers, why don't they say so to their advertisers?

My own view is that the support of the press is certainly better than a poke in the eye, especially given the enforced impartiality of broadcasting. If I were a politician I would rather have a newspaper with me than against me, as much for my own morale as for any putative influence over the electorate. The relationship between politicians and papers is that of lover and wayward mistress. The latter is always on the point of leaving. Rows are always painful. Never in recent history has the Tory press been so persistently hostile to a Tory government as it has since 1992. The affair has gone on too long and grown stale. *The Sun's* editorial — a gem of terse prose — might have been written of just such an affair: "The Tories have all the right policies but all the wrong faces... after 18 years, they have become sloppy, divided and tired... they need time to sort themselves out."

The Tories' best hope is that readers of *The Sun* have dissembled to the pollsters all along. They never noticed its politics. They will not start now. But then only fools and back-passers blame the press for election results. Newspapers are about oiling democracy's wheels, not replacing them. They may try to relieve the voters of their sovereignty. But the voters have a cursed habit of making up their own minds. They defied prediction in 1945, 1970 and 1992.

The only way to tolerate the next six weeks is to treat the race as deliciously open — or go to bed and stay there.

Simon Jenkins

Surprise pitch

AFTER more than 45 years on Westminster's green benches, one would not expect Tony Benn, MP for Chesterfield, to resort to political gimmickry to secure his return at the election. Benn was spotted the other day with a hydrangea-sized blue rosette in his buttonhole, watching a football match.

From David Mellor, this kind of laddish behaviour wouldn't raise an eyebrow. But from Benn, a pipe-smoking tea-drinker, it is unusual in the extreme.

He had turned out to watch Chesterfield Football Club beat Wrexham in the quarter-finals of the FA Cup earlier this month, donning their blue and white.

Yesterday, local supporters said they could not remember seeing Tony Benn at the ground before. Sheffield Wednesday supporter and fellow Labour MP Roy Hattersley was scathing. "I imagine it's the first time he's been to a football match in his life," he said. "He was sporting cheap rosettes and looking absolutely ridiculous."

Mr Benn, however, insisted that he supports his constituency team and has previously watched them play at Wembley. He said he was delighted by their success in the FA

Cup. "They've had an electric influence on the town. Everyone's walking ten-feet tall. I'll follow them to Old Trafford to watch them against Middlesbrough."

● A dutiful cleaner at an Amsterdam art gallery swept up a pile of ash and cigarette butts. He wasn't to know they represented the work of Japanese sculptor Keizo Ato



Benn: new colours?

intended to express "the smoker's dilemma when he knows he should stop but can't".

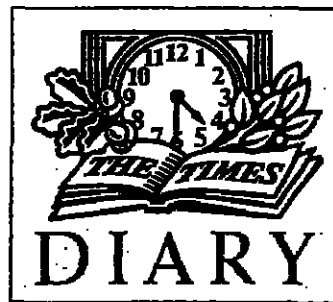
Head man

PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S insistence on hiring a British mercenary force to help to put down a long-running insurrection, as reported in yesterday's *Times*, will have come as little surprise to Jeremy Hanley, MP — a man who goes down big in the South Pacific.

Visiting the country in October, he was accorded a personal guard armed with a bow and arrow and wearing little more than a skirt of feathers and a Group 4 Security armband.

Though happy in the custody of his warrior, Hanley was alarmed by a conversation that he happened to overhear between the British High Commissioner's wife and the Governor General's wife. "I have three children," said the former, "a banker, a lawyer, and a headhunter." The latter nodded. "Yes, we have many headhunters over here too."

● The politically correct are tightening their grip at the BBC. A documentary tonight on the *Fens* presented by my colleague Jonathan Meades originally bore the



lively title Land of the Superdykes. For fear of putting off certain viewers, it was renamed Double Dutch.

Walk on

RAMBLERS in Gloucestershire would be well advised to avoid Gatombe Park, where they risk a frosty reception from its chateleine, the Princess Royal. Interviewed in this week's *Stroud News*, a tremendous local rag, she has little time for the anarcho classes.

"Farmers are not wardens who manage a whole load of paths for... scramblers and rambblers," she says, adding that brideways should be reserved for "horse-drawn traffic".

Her dislike of pedestrian thoroughfares put her off buying Highgrove, now home to her brother the Prince of Wales, when she was

house-hunting 10 years ago. "There was a footpath running through the middle which we had no chance of moving."

Revelatory

IN THE front row yesterday morning at Labour's first full press conference of the election campaign was the Tory MP Jerry Hayes's homosexual former researcher Paul Stone. After his unsavoury revelations in the *News of the World*, Stone has moved over to Labour and claims to have been in touch with several Labour MPs. "If I could be useful to Tony Blair



and the party I would love to help," he said by way of an explanation for his attendance. "They're a lot better on gay issues and if I can do anything to publicise these, then I will." By last night Labour was denying all knowledge of his interest. "We've no one registered under that name, and no one remembers seeing him there," said an official.

Late smile

FINALLY, there is a glimmer of a smile on the face of Michael "Captain Grumpy" Atherton, as a result of a posthumous gift from the late Willie Rushton, cartoonist and satirist. In a rare moment of leisure, Atherton was browsing through some prints in a London art gallery last weekend when the establishment's owner handed him a Rushton original of left-arm spinner Phil Tufnell.

"I couldn't have asked him to pay," says Jack Duncan, founder of the William Rushton archive. "Willie was a mad-keen cricketer and would have been honoured for the England captain to have it." Fixture list permitting, Atherton has agreed to open a Rushton retrospective planned by Mr Duncan later this year.

P.H.S

Alan Coren



Wish me luck as you wave me goodbye

Monday, March 17

Dear Diary: One is a bit glum. One has just said goodbye to one's Prime Minister, and one's Prime Minister did that endearingly awkward little bow he does, and gave that charming little smile he gives, and the door closed, and now one hears the creak of the fourth stair as his shoe depresses it, such a sensible shoe, so shined, so neatly laced, almost certainly made in Northampton, and one is decidedly feeling a trifle low. One rather suspects that the next Prime Minister might wear frightfully famous Italian loafers with those little tassels on. The sort dogs snap at.

The object of his visit was to inform one that the date of the general election was to be May 1. He made a little joke about Labour Day, as one would expect of him. One rather fears one has heard the last of his quite excellent little jokes: one will always remember that delightful story about the Irish chicken and the road. How one laughed! One rather suspects that the next Prime Minister might not tell jokes with Irish chickens in them. The greater likelihood is that he will tell very long jokes indeed, of which one will never entirely grasp the point.

One observes that one's Prime Minister did not eat his second Hob-Nob. That is uncharacteristic of him. Perhaps he is a bit glum, too. As he has so often told one, he is very partial to a Hob-Nob. Not quite as partial, mind, as he used to be to the squashed-fly biscuit, about the disappearance of which one was once given a most illuminating lecture. It seems they cannot be obtained in any of the Huntingdon supermarkets for love or money. One rather suspects this not to be a subject upon which the next Prime Minister would be able to shed any light. Worse, one fears he might try to interest one in polemics. Or squid.

Or Web sites. One has heard that he is eager to put all one's loyal subjects onto this. One has, of course, just been put onto it oneself, but one does not have the faintest idea what it is, except that one's loyal subjects may now access, one believes the word is, one's soft furnishings, pictures, pot plants, and so forth. One is not entirely happy with this. One's current Prime Minister never raised fashionable technologies. We did, however, discuss our first bicycles in some depth. By happy chance, we both owned Rudges. His had drop handlebars and three speeds and a panier which held two bottles of Tizer and enough bread pudding for four people, though it lacked a dynamo, because these cost £2 6s 3d, and he was saving up for new pads. It seems the buckles on his old ones came undone when he ran. He is most enlightening about cricket: one had never quite understood the googly, before. One rather suspects the next Prime Minister might not be interested in cricket at all. Football seems to be his game — one has seen him, on the television, actually playing it. One fears the worst for future weekly chats: one has scant interest in soccer, especially since One's Park Rangers were relegated.

One also understands that the next Prime Minister is a member of Trimdon Colliery and Deaf Hill Working Men's Club, which, one somehow doubts to be a prime source of jolly anecdote. One could, one supposes, inquire how Deaf Hill came by its name, but the likelihood is that the next Prime Minister would prefer to address matters of greater pith. He went to Oxford and is rumoured to be something of a thinker, whereas the current Prime Minister and one have three O levels and an ATS diploma in lorry-maintenance between us: a situation which, how might one put it, does much to prevent us from boring one another stiff.

And then there is the matter of wives. One has just peeked from the window, Diary, and watched him walking to his motor car with that special little lode of his. One will rather miss that lode. Oh, see, he has given his special little grin to the driver. One will rather miss that grin. And the way he settles his spectacles with his forefinger. And the way he says "wunt". Such a very nice man. How difficult it must be for one's loyal subjects to cast their vote! One is really rather grateful, all things considered, not to have one.



PUBLISH OR BE DAMNED

Sleaze cannot be kept under wraps until after the election

The calling of the election has seen attention, naturally, move from Westminster to the hustings. But important judgments at the polls depend on business which Parliament seems fated not to finish. In preparation for the campaign, the Commons is busy with itself with tying up loose ends. There is, one which has been left hanging, like a suspended noose. The report by Sir Gordon Downey into the "cash for questions" allegations against Neil Hamilton and others will not, now, be published until after the election. It is insupportable that an investigation as important as this should, after the months lavished on it, spend the election under lock and key. When democracy needs them most, watchdogs should not be kept in quarantine.

No one is well-served by the suppression of this report. The electors of Tatton will be invited to pass their own sentence on Mr Hamilton at the polls, without having heard the evidence which might either condemn or exonerate him. The Tories have claimed collectively, as loudly as Mr Hamilton has individually, that they have been unfairly tarnished by sleaze. The one document which might, however, restore some confidence will languish unread for the duration of the campaign.

The Liberal Democrat MP Simon Hughes pointed out yesterday that it is John Major's dissolution timing which apparently precludes publication. Voters may believe that the Prime Minister could have been motivated by a desire to suppress the report. If so, far from limiting the damage that sleaze might cause, he has only given voters another reason to suspect sharp practice. Mr Major surely cannot want this election to proceed with his candidates awaiting Sir Gordon's judgment.

When the inquiry was set up, in defiance of opposition calls for a full tribunal, Mr

Major said he did not want this matter to be sent into "the long grass". That, however, is where matters now rest and the Prime Minister cannot hide behind parliamentary procedure. Sir Gordon, working a four-day week, has hardly been the Stakhanov of the committee corridors but the primary fault is not his, but the Government's. Lord Nolan may investigate matters after the election but the Tories should want to present the voters with a clean bill of health, not a post-mortem. If the Conservatives want to preserve their reputation they should publish, or be damned.

Although the electorate is short-changed by the non-appearance of the report, the most conspicuous victim is Mr Hamilton. It is difficult to inspire sympathy for the former minister, but in this manner he deserves his portion. The uncontested evidence of his stay at the Paris Ritz at Mohamed Al Fayed's expense and his relationship with the lobbyist Ian Greer raise worrying questions about his judgment. They are not, however, central to the charge against him of corruption. The allegation that Mr Hamilton accepted cash for asking parliamentary questions is bitterly contested.

The main evidence against Mr Hamilton on this charge has, so far, come from Mr Al Fayed and his employees. Thirteen days ago his extraordinary allegation that the Home Secretary had accepted a £1.5 million bribe was "authoritatively" dismissed by Sir Gordon, who found no evidence to support Mr Al Fayed's claims. Sir Gordon is not the first investigator to find Mr Al Fayed's evidence less than reliable. If the electors of Tatton want to know whether or not their Member is a "liar and a cheat" before deciding to vote for him, they cannot, on past record, take Mr Al Fayed's word for it. They need Sir Gordon's.

LAKE IN THE DRINK

Fundraising scandal claims its first political victim

With the withdrawal of Anthony Lake as his prospective CIA Director, President Clinton has suffered the first outright political defeat of his second term. There has been much protest and anger from the Oval Office about the allegedly unfair treatment of his nominee. A poisonous atmosphere of pure partisanship has been blamed for the demise of a clearly qualified candidate. The confirmation process has been condemned as an impediment to the recruitment of worthy citizens to serve in public office.

Much of this is disingenuous. Mr Lake was always a controversial choice to head the Central Intelligence Agency. His background is in the academic world rather than the defence community from which such figures have usually been drawn. He had, at best, a modest record as National Security Adviser in Mr Clinton's first term. During that tenure he had concealed from Congress his knowledge that Iran was providing military assistance to Bosnia's Muslims.

The President moved him from that post as part of a wide-ranging restructuring of his foreign policy team and offered him the CIA position as an alternative. The previous incumbent, John Deutch, had been dropped for admitting publicly that Saddam Hussein had been strengthened by the fratricide among Iraqi Kurds last year. From the moment his name was floated, the Senate intelligence committee made it quite clear that he would be subject to intense scrutiny.

The same Republican Senate that has been accused of vindictiveness accepted virtually all Mr Clinton's other major appointments without dispute. The role of CIA Director has always been treated with exceptional sensitivity. Until the early 1970s Congress had minimal influence over intelligence activities. Since then, Capitol Hill has demanded independent figures whom it

trusted. In 1977, a Democratic Senate informed President Carter that his choice, Theodore Sorenson, would not do. In 1991, President Bush's preference, Robert Gates, barely survived a Senate vote. Mr Lake was at least as contentious this time.

His fate was sealed when he became embroiled in the assorted fundraising scandals that have haunted Mr Clinton since his re-election. The FBI had informed National Security Council staff last June that associates of the Chinese Government were attempting to steer money towards the Democratic Party - a move that was both obviously undesirable and patently illegal. This information apparently never reached Mr Lake nor was it sent to the White House.

On Monday it emerged that Mr Lake had also not been informed that his office had failed to prevent Roger Tamraz, an oil financier, from meeting Mr Clinton. That liaison had been promoted by the chairman of the Democratic National Committee who believed he could solicit a large donation if the President would co-operate. The fact that their proposed sponsor has been wanted in Lebanon on embezzlement charges for a decade seemingly bothered neither party nor President.

The current charged environment in Washington certainly contributed to Mr Lake's downfall but did not exclusively create it. Politics in the American capital has largely ground to a halt while Republicans seek to extract further documentation on how the Clinton-Gore campaign was financed. Those efforts will continue until the Justice Department selects an independent counsel to investigate the affair. It is now as much in Mr Clinton's interests as his opponents that such an appointment be made. In either case Mr Lake is unlikely to be the last casualty of the China connection.

CULTURAL CAMPAIGNS

The British arts festival season is democracy in action

Do not despair. For the next six weeks there is life other than the general election. May 1 is polling day. But it is also the first day of the Glasgow Mayfest, which will continue all month to celebrate all the arts throughout the city. And in it there will be world premieres, famous companies from abroad, drama and controversy, probably about Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's opera *Resurrection*.

And Glasgow is just one of the season of British arts festivals that will run from now until October. Today our Arts Pages publish a selection of 50 of the brightest and best of them. From Easter onwards not a day will pass without festivals in some remote corner, country town or crowded inner city of the land. They range from the blockbusters, such as Edinburgh and Cheltenham, Bath and Brighton, to the specialist, such as Aldeburgh for contemporary music, and York for the early kind. Notting Hill's Carnival has become as famous as those of Rio or New Orleans. There is rock and pop in all their varieties at Glastonbury, Phoenix and Reading, theatre at Chichester, Shakespeare at Arundel, opera at Glyndebourne and the Eisteddfod at Llangollen.

Some festivals are very old. This summer brings the 103rd season of the BBC's Promenade Concerts and the 50th of the Edinburgh Festival. The Hereford Three Choirs is Europe's oldest choral festival. Some festivals are new. This is the second year of the Docklands Festival, and the first

of the Daphne Du Maurier Festival in Cornwall. Depending on how the count is taken, there are now about 500 festivals during the British season. This poll does not include the thousands of Muggleonian pageants and pig-roastings that last for only a weekend. The number grows every year. Often the standard is extremely high, ambitious and eclectic, bringing top-quality culture in all its international forms to those who live remote from the big cities.

The connection between politics and the arts is closer than is often recognised. Festivals make opportunity, choice and ownership of lasting goods available to all. They can turn the cultural have-nots into cultural haves. It is no accident that the first democracy was founded by the society that invented festivals. Those great celebrations of the first tragedy and comedy were a cement of civil society and a chance to display the genius, as well as the might and wealth, of Athens to the world. The British theatre grew out of the medieval mystery plays. These will be played again at festivals this year, as they have been for more than seven centuries.

Life without the arts makes a barren and uncivil society. The great drama of the general election will occupy centre stage in Britain for the next six weeks. But at the same time the festivals of Britain will show that there is life after politics, connected and commenting on it.

Counter-claims on tax and spending

From the Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury

Sir, William Waldegrave deceives himself "Labour's liaison with Leviathan", March 13). He says that Conservatives distrust Leviathan. This from a Government which has centralised power on an unparalleled level and which spends exactly the same share of national income now as it inherited in 1978-79.

He misleads himself elsewhere as well. The UK growth rate over the last 18 years is less than that achieved by the last Labour Government and is less than the European Union average.

His claims that public sector borrowing is under control don't stand up. By the end of the current financial year the Government will have had to borrow £65 billion more than they promised in 1992. The national debt has doubled since John Major became Prime Minister.

And his claims about our pledged spending commitments don't bear examination either. Indeed, these claims, frequently repeated, are widely discredited. Mr Waldegrave's problem is that, increasingly, no one believes a word this Government says. They sought the trust of the British people in 1992. They have now lost that trust completely.

Yours sincerely,
AUSTIN DARLING,
Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury,
House of Commons,
March 14.

From Mr Paul Ashton

Sir, Lord Healey (letter, March 15) may well be right in claiming that the average family is paying more in taxes as a proportion of income today than in 1978-79 when he was Chancellor; but the tone of his letter suggests that a Labour government would have done better. We may still need some convincing of this.

For example, his party has consistently voted against income tax rate cuts. If the 1978-79 tax rates were still in force now, along with indexed thresholds, the proportion of average earnings taken in tax and national insurance contributions would, I calculate, be almost five percentage points higher today (30.6 per cent against 25.9 per cent).

Further, for Labour to have done better than the present Government on spending as a proportion of GDP, it would have to be spending less than the Government is now doing. I would hazard to guess that not many of us think that likely.

Labour has come a long way in moderating its tax-and-spend policies, but it is a bit much to ask us to believe that taxes and spending would be as low or lower now had Lord Healey's party been in power since 1979.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL ASHTON,
37 Benbow Avenue, Langney Point,
Eastbourne, East Sussex,
March 15.

From Sir David Mitchell,

MP for Hampshire North West (Conservative)

Sir, Before the last general election John Major made it abundantly clear that he had no intention of increasing taxes. The Opposition attacks him for 22 increases (you can just get to that figure but it takes a bit of mental agility). However, in doing so Labour raises the central question of what it would have done had it been in government in the circumstances in which John Major's Chancellor found himself.

The recession continued longer and deeper than expected. Spending on unemployment and associated benefits rose, government receipts from VAT and corporation tax fell. The Government had either to increase tax or print the money to cover the shortfall.

Is Labour's hidden message that it would have, and would in future, print and return to soaring inflation, as it did before?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID MITCHELL,
House of Commons,
March 17.

Local taxation

From Councillor Sir Jeremy Beecham

Sir, Sir Ronald Watson (letter, March 7) appears to criticise my view that it is necessary for there to be a shift in the proportion of local authority income from the amount raised centrally to that raised locally.

Yet local accountability is impossible without a more explicit connection between local expenditure and local taxation. Sir Ron himself has in the past recognised this in his calls for capping to be ended in order, as he has put it, that local councils should not be allowed to claim either that they are spending at a level permitted by central government or that their inability to provide adequate local services is inhibited by central government.

He also omits to mention that the present Government's own plans for shadowing a decrease in the proportion of central funding.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY BEECHAM,
Chairman, Association of Metropolitan Authorities,
38 Great Smith Street, SW1,
March 11.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Dorrell's plans for long-term residential care for elderly

From the Executive Director of ARPOSO

Sir, Stephen Dorrell presents his scheme for long-term residential care of the elderly as a major policy decision affecting everyone (report, March 13). In fact, it will do no more than assist a tiny proportion of those who must sell their homes in order to pay for such care. Even they will achieve this only at very considerable cost and with no guarantee that, in the end, the funds will be allocated as they desire.

In June 1996 the National Association of Pension Funds, giving evidence to the Commons Health Committee stated that a couple aged 65 would have to pay £315 per month to cover an average-size house. Although figures now being quoted may be slightly lower than this, such estimates are entirely beyond the reach of most people. Indeed PPF Lifetime has stated that its policyholders typically have assets of more than £250,000.

What is of equal concern is the manner in which funds are eventually made available. It must be proved that the person can no longer perform certain "activities for daily living", with criteria being arbitrarily fixed by the insurance company. In many cases payments will then be made direct to the care provider.

It is difficult to avoid the feeling that policy of this kind is mere tokenism, diverting attention from the real problem, which is the growing neglect of the 95 per cent of dependent people who are cared for in their own homes and for whom essential services are rapidly disappearing.

Yours faithfully,
DONALD W. STEELE,
Executive Director,
ARPOSO (Association of Retired and Persons Over 50),
Greenoat House,
Francis Street, SW1,
March 13.

From the Community Care Manager of the Independent Healthcare Association

Sir, Despite the comment by Chris Smith, Shadow Health Secretary - "the triumph of dogma over common sense" - the IHCA believes that there is much in Mr Dorrell's White Paper which can be supported by all political parties. Indeed, a spokesman for the Labour Party has already spoken in favour of some of the proposed regulatory changes.

Ending the legal distinction between residential care and nursing homes will enable providers to give a more flexible service in line with changing client needs; and national benchmarks for care standards will help stop the inconsistent approaches taken by regulating authorities.

Social services will remain major purchasers for the immediate future and, as such, will still be hugely influential in deciding how the market for care will develop. I can see no well-founded argument for them continuing to provide and regulate it as well.

Yours faithfully,
A. MACKAY,
Community Care Manager,
Independent Healthcare Association,
22 Little Russell Street, WC1,
March 14.

From the Chief Executive of Scope

Sir, Mr Dorrell's White Paper presents a dramatic shift in policy, placing responsibility for care needs onto the individual disabled person and their family. If the Government contracts out of care provision, not only of residential services but also the vast amount of care services provided to people in their own homes, disabled people could be left without choice and without a safety net.

Yet again we see the rights and needs of disabled people sidelined in favour of penny-pinching policies.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD BREWSTER,
Chief Executive,
Scope (formerly The Spastics Society),
12 Park Crescent, W1.

Politics of hope

From Mr Nicolas Walter

Sir, If the atrocities of the French Revolution were committed "in the name" of liberty, equality and fraternity and the atrocities of the Russian Revolution were committed "under the same banner", as is boldly but wrongly suggested by Sir Bernard Kauffas (letter, March 10), in what name and under what banner have the atrocities of the "Judeo-Christian tradition" been committed?

The Old Testament is full of horrors in this life and the New Testament threatens more in the next, and for 3,000 years there have been religious wars and persecutions, stonings and burnings, crusades and inquisitions, witch-hunts and pogroms, slavery and segregation.

If God, Jesus and the Bible are not demeaned by the fact that they have been taken in vain by some of their followers, why should liberty, equality and fraternity be demeaned by the fact that they have too?

Yours etc,
NICOLAS WALTER,
Nationalist Press Association,
88 Islington High Street, N1,
March 10.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number - 0171-782 5046.

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Yours faithfully,
RICHARD BREWSTER,
Chief Executive,
Scope (formerly The Spastics Society),
12 Park Crescent, W1.

From Mr Robert Waterhouse

Sir, A simple way to deal with the problem of the cost of residential care for the elderly would surely be through death duties. Alteration to the current exemption system, so that the estates of all persons dying over retirement age (irrespective of whether they had themselves benefited from residential care) were subject to a modest and clearly defined deduction, for example as a percentage.

Such a system, I suggest, would be

simple to administer and fair to everyone; it would be vastly superior to the Government's proposals involving insurance companies, the main beneficiary of which would, I suspect, be those companies and not the citizens of this country.

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT WATERHOUSE,
5 Heatherbank, Chislehurst, Kent,
March 12.

From Ms Tessa Harding

Sir, Professor Alan Williams of the Centre for Health Economics at the University of York suggests that discriminating against the elderly is an "appropriate" way of rationing scarce health resources (report, March 14). Is he seriously saying that this country is so poor that it cannot afford healthcare for its older people?

If we spend a lower proportion of our GDP (under 7 per cent) on health than nearly all OECD countries, it is because we choose to, not out of economic necessity.

Certainly we could and should be doing more to help older people retain their independence. We could be making sure people's homes are warm and well insulated; that public transport is convenient and accessible; that corner shops and village post offices stay open; that there is enough good primary and other domiciliary care available when people need it. To take these "unpleasant measures" would make both human and economic sense and help people remain independent, as they wish. But we are not doing that either at present.

It is not a question of choosing between those sensible measures and high-quality healthcare; we need both. Once we start making judgments about the value of people's lives on the basis that they belong to a particular group or class in society, we are on a very slippery slope. Discrimination on grounds of age is no more acceptable than discrimination on grounds of race, gender or class.

Yours etc,
TESSA HARDING
(Head of Planning and Development),
Help the Aged,
St James's Walk,
Clerkenwell Green, EC1,
March 17.

Cloning limitations

From Dr Christopher Gardner-Thorpe

Sir, Mr Alan Challoner (letter, March 13) notes that the influence of the environment "creates individuality that cannot be reproduced by cloning" - but is there evidence of this?

Why do cells which replicate during later life fail to resemble youthful cells? Skin is a good example. We do not seem to produce childlike characteristics in each new tissue repair. Presumably some memory process is ongoing and this may include memory of environmental factors. Thus a clone may include characteristics and memory acquired during the lifetime of the donor.

Could cloning from long-dead human tissue lead, perhaps after refinement of the technique in the years to come, to individuals who could tell us about decades gone by? The idea may seem horrifying but it is intriguing and not capable of disproof.

Yours sincerely,
CHRISTOPHER GARDNER-THORPE
(Consultant neurologist),
The Coach House,
la College Road, Exeter, Devon,
March 14.

From Mr Charles Dodd

Sir, Mr Nathan Griggs's prediction of an "Equal rights for clones" campaign (letter, March 15) need not concern us yet awhile. What we need to watch out for now is the promotional message: "You're never alone with a clone."

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES DODD,
Solway, 55 West Street,
Corfe Castle, Dorset,
March 15.

From Mrs M. M. Robinson

Sir, Miss Barbara Wanford (letter, March 15) need have no worries about who would programme the video in a world full of female clones. Most adolescent females, if told that they have to be out of the house when the Spice Girls are due to appear on television, will learn to programme any video in a matter of minutes.

They will also probably work out how to return the machine to avoid Channel 5 interference if necessary.

Yours faithfully,
J. A. ROBINSON,
Cobdown,
Copt Hall Road, Ighiteam, Kent,
March 15.

From Mr Frank Rich

Sir, Miss Wanford wonders if we could dispense with the entire male population.

The task of programming the video would, of course, be performed entirely by grandchildren. Within a fortnight, however, the world would be ruled by spiders living in bathrooms.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK RICH,
9 Garden Close,
Hampton, Middlesex,
March 16.

Collectors as 'looters'

From Mr Christopher Cavey, FSA

Sir, I find it astounding that Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorpe, a trustee of the British Museum, should condemn collectors of antiquities as "financing the cycle of destruction" of archaeological sites (report, March 13). The British Museum's collections, in common with nearly all major museum collections in the world, owe their existence to collectors and for centuries have relied on them and on dealers for their enhancement. Attitudes such as Lord Renfrew's could well discourage them from giving museums their hard-won accumulations - a terrible loss to the nation, science and history.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER CAVEY,
178 Hicks Avenue,
Greenford, Middlesex,
March 13.

Bit of a mix-up


From Mrs Pamela Morgan

Sir, On hearing someone being interviewed on the Radio 4 *Woman's Hour* programme today who said, "I am a Jewish atheist, thank God", I felt rather confused.

Yours faithfully,
PAMELA MORGAN,
9 Winterstoke Gardens,
Mill Hill, NW7,
March 12.

IS DAY

19, 1948



Plain Words was a guide to the writing of clear and simple English. Written at the instigation of the Civil Service, the style won it admirers far and wide. It became a bestseller.

Under conditions "when the war was over," wrote the abstract. It was no miner that he should and flexible approach to writing. (Laughter.) The prefer short, straight sentences. Must everything be said it must be "scarcely" considered that a matter of consideration. Was it to be considered otherwise

than "actively"? He was told by a Civil servant that the phrase really meant that the file boxes lost and attempts were being made to find it. (Laughter.)

He hoped that "Plain Words" incorporate an *index expurgatoris* — a list of forbidden words and phrases — and that copy would be placed in the library of the House of Commons.

MR. HALL, Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Cobbe Valley, Lab.), said that the phrases referred to were not peculiar to servants. English was a personal language and frequently one got phrases which might not be grammatical but which directly conveyed the meaning. For instance, there was a record in Whitehall of a resignation by Mr. Churchill which read: "This morning up with which I will not do." (Laughter.)

There was much phrasing which became established by long usage and applied largely to Parliamentary drafts. He agreed that there was a good deal of ambiguity, but much of the difficulty arisen because Civil servants had to interpret Acts of Parliament to the ordinary citizen. "Plain Words" was used as a text-book in the service and every effort was made towards simplification.

Science: the bitter pill forced down once a year

Why does the Sun still go round the Earth?

Time once again for National Brainwashing Week. Hype as insidious as Mother's Day is now in progress to convince us that we ought to pay more attention to the old dear. I refer, of course, to science. National Science Week was dreamt up four years ago by the Department of Trade and Industry to give all those worthy enterprises that already knock themselves out in the name of science a chance to do more of it with the hope that this time some of the "don't cares" will pay attention.

I have nothing against science. Years ago I was chairman of the Association of British Science Writers for two years. Field trips, such as going to see the dinosaur tracks in the Connecticut River Valley or the CERN particle accelerator near Geneva, are among my cherished memories. But I do hate Thought Police, and what is being done in this week, which has no particular claim on the calendar except the theme gap between Mother's Day and Easter, feels like propaganda. Newspapers are pretty immune but the BBC has swallowed it whole.

In aid of what? The one conclusion to be drawn from previous science weeks is that they have had no effect whatsoever. Belief in the supernatural, the irrational, the paranormal has never been higher. Many newspapers would sooner dispense with their weather reports than with their astrologist. Every so often a poll shows that many people still think that the Sun goes round the Earth: it's just common sense, as we can all see for ourselves every night when the sun goes down.

For the converted, Britain is well served. The science programmes on radio and television, and the pages in the newspapers, are very good. BBC's *Horizon*, at its new grown-up time of 9.25pm on Thursdays, is drawing well over five million viewers a week — impressive when you consider that the alien-haunted *X-Files* gets seven million. Why not tell some other branch of knowledge that it ought to try harder to spread enlightenment? Why not National Economics Week? I'm sure we all need help telling the difference between GDP and GNP.

I don't buy the argument that Dolly the cloned sheep has made science more interesting to a wider public. What excites people is ethics, religion and survival, not science. They are alarmed at threats to their sense of identity and to their cherished beliefs. They want to know what the law should do to control future research. What they do not want to hear is the scientific truth: that nurture is as important as nature in shaping the individual, sheep or child. Dr Steve Jones, the geneticist, puts it best: "If you want

to design your son's future, send him to Eton." No genetic engineering, he says, will produce such a guaranteed result.

The main lesson about science is failing to get through. Science is a method, not a body of established fact, a way of overturning certainties, not of proclaiming them. How many times in this past agonised year of BSE have you heard someone say "I wish they'd just tell us the truth"? As if "they", the scientists, were somehow like the Cabinet, a group who know something they are not telling, rather than disparate investigators around the world puzzled by a disease for which there is still no absolutely proven link to human beings. I once heard a Russian ask my husband, then Editor of *Nature*, the British science journal, "How much of what you print is wrong?"

"All of it," was the answer. That is, in time, today's knowledge will be supplanted.

That warning ought to be at the beginning of all so-called "science" programmes. I would improve them another way. Before plunging into a discussion of Fermat's Last Theorem or the beauty of the square of the number minus-one (see tonight's *Seven Wonders of the World* on BBC2), I would set on the screen "To understand this programme, what you should know is..." Then, at the end, before those endless lists of credits which thank every museum, photo archive and laboratory from here to Yucatan, I would

say "What this programme has shown is..." I would not try to dress up health, diet, religion and gee-whiz gadgetry as "science". I would not try to teach the Second Law of Thermodynamics without explaining what the First Law is. And I would say that scientists who admit to uncertainty are the trustworthy ones. Above all, I would stop insulting science by treating it as a bitter pill that has to be sugared and forced down once a year.

I have always told American friends that Britain did not need presidential-style television debates because the party leaders face each other all the time in the House of Commons. Yet the American model does seem to have stirred an appetite in Britain for encounters more direct and less predictable than the ritualistic *Question Time*. Why not then go the whole American hog and ask the Prime Minister to give regular televised press conferences? Even if these did not yield great moments — such as the veteran reporter May Craig's question to John F. Kennedy: "Mr President, what are you doing for women?" — they would let fresh air into a closed system.



BRENDA MADDOX

Eight MPs ready for any action

FIGHTING the general election may seem like small beer to eight intrepid MPs who agreed to experience the rigours of military life for a year as part of the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme. Their exploits, which were recorded by a BBC2 documentary team, make taking to the hustings look like a doddle.

In the first two programmes in the series, *Politicians on Parade*, Lady Olga Maitland, the Conservative MP, is pitted against John Home Robertson, a Labour colleague, on the Army firing range. Lady Olga apparently took with gusto the challenge of training with the Forces, but admitted she had cheated a little and had hidden an essential lipstick in one of the pockets of her bag.

Other game MPs who took part include the Tories Peter Luff and Sir Roger Moore, and the Labour members Andrew Miller and Paddy Tipping. The final episode shows the Tory Piers Merchant and the Labour Gerry Steinberg experiencing their first Hawk jet



Mix-ups: John Prescott and Jane Moore of The Sun

flight. To prepare for the flight the two were put in a decompression chamber and suffered such bad memory loss that Mr Steinberg could not remember the name of the Prime Minister. It is tragic what some MPs will do to get on the telly.

False alarm

THERE was mayhem at the *Sunday Mirror* last Saturday night after reports that John Prescott, deputy leader of the Labour Party, had had a heart attack. An anonymous caller to the newsdesk reported that



Mr Prescott had been attending a function at Cave Castle, Humberside, when he collapsed and was taken to hospital strapped to a stretcher and clutching his chest.

A new front page was drawn up with a huge picture of Mr Prescott, looking solemn if not exactly dead, and a team of reporters leapt into action, telephoning hospitals, the emergency services and the Castle. Twenty minutes later, Mr Prescott rang the newsdesk and said: "Eh, what's all this about me 'avin' 'eart attack? Some bugger's been winding you up." Suspi-

dion has fallen on backs from rival papers.

● **GOOD news for pluggers.** Channel 5 has made record companies an offer it hopes they cannot refuse. Artists with new releases will be able to get free plugs not once but three times in one day. You provide the artist, the station promises, and we will get them on *Exclusive*, the five-nights-a-week entertainment news show presented by the Virgin Radio DJ Jonathan Coleman, plus on the late-night chat show presented by Jack Docherty and Five's Company, the afternoon magazine programme hosted by a posse of bright young things. How happy the audience will be with such saturation coverage, however, is another matter.

Dressy award

AT THE British Press Awards at the Royal Lancaster Hotel, Jane Moore, women's editor of *The Sun*, was approached by a slaving old boy who thrust a metal slab into her hands and said: "I'd like you to take this award for being the best-dressed person here."

The next morning, she realised what she had been given — *The Guardian's* award for team reporting. Over in Farringdon Road there was

much beard-stroking and pencil-chewing among *The Guardian's* diggers about the whereabouts of their trophy.

Ms Moore used it as a paperweight in her Wapping office until the joke wore thin and then she bled it back to Alan Rusbridger, Editor of *The Guardian*, with a note saying: "It's a long, tedious story, but hopefully you'll know who this belongs to."

Ms Moore received a note of thanks saying: "Not since the Jules Rimet trophy (World Cup) disappeared in 1966 has there been such a thing..."

Model writer

WHEN *GQ* Active, Condé Nast's new monthly handbook for outdoor types, is launched next month, it will be heavy on celebrity columnists with the model Yasmin le Bon writing the motorcycling column and the footballer-wine buff Lee Chapman advising readers on drinks.

"Yasmin just loves driving and knows a lot about cars," trills a spokeswoman. "And Lee has a very extensive and valuable cellar. We know their capabilities."

● **Callers to The Sun**, the newspaper that backs Tony Blair, yesterday received a cheery greeting from staff: "Hello, the New Sun."

Attitude-altering slaps

BRITVIC Soft Drinks is hoping to repeat the so-called success of its 1991 campaign for Orange Tango by launching an anarchic commercial which exploits the countdown to the general election.

The ads feature caricatures of MPs being humiliated in a typical Orange Tango scenario. It will break on March 30 on Channel 5, which begins broadcasting on the same day. Channel No. 5 says it will be the first ad to air on the new station.

Britvic changed the face of soft drinks advertising with its Orange Man slapping people in the face. Sister brands Apple, Lemon and Blackcurrant Tango have used similarly off-the-wall work, with Blackcurrant Tango last week picking up the Best Commercial of the Year prize at the British Television Advertising Awards for its "St George" ad filmed on the cliffs of Dover.

ADVERTISING

THE Institute of Practitioners in Advertising has run a competition among communications students to create an advertising campaign that will stir apathetic 18 to 25-year-olds into voting.

Fewer than 45 per cent of young people bothered to vote in the last election — an issue that was tackled by a rather lacklustre £750,000 government campaign last year and was debated only last week in the House of Lords.

One winning entrant suggested hiring a youth icon such as Chris Evans to front a rousing campaign to push teenagers towards the polling station.

Perhaps it is not surprising that today's youth feels disenfranchised. One statistic unearthed by the stu-

dents was that 175 MPs are aged over 60 and only 25 under 40.

AGENCY brows will furrow at the news that Stella Artola is siphoning much of its advertising budget this summer into sponsorship and marketing.

The UK's premium lager is injecting £25 million into linking its name with film entertainment by means of, among numerous other projects, broadcast sponsorships of movies on both Channels 4 and 5 and national sponsorship of Virgin Radio's "Big Screen" film round-up show.

Any advertising activity will be virtually lost among all this, with plans only for a modest £750,000 cinema campaign through its agency Lowe Howard-Spink. Last year's total ad spend was a sturdier £4.2 million.

BELINDA ARCHER



Britvic humiliation for MPs

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Channel 5 sets out its new order of the day

Celebrities and comedies to fill the unexploited time slots, reports Alexandra Frean

For the past few months, Dawn Airey, the director of programmes at Channel 5, has been keeping a diary chronicling the ups and downs of her efforts to get the nation's newest television station on air on March 30. Much to the dismay of her boyfriend, she sits down for three hours every Saturday, her only "day off", to write it.

If Airey goes the way of other media launch bosses and loses her job after a few months, she may well find that that diary comes in useful: many publishers would no doubt be interested in publishing *The Confessions of a Channel 5 Insider*.

Airey is too busy to give the idea of *lullaby* more than a fleeting thought, however. "I spend all of my days in meetings solving problems. Problem-solving is what I am good at — that and making decisions quickly. Only at around 8pm can I start doing the rest of my work," she says.

Unlike Channel 4, launched 15 years ago proclaiming its minority remit with "Viewers Keep Out" signs all over it, Channel 5 is entering a market hungry for more choice, and expecting to have its mass-market tastes catered for. The margins for error are therefore quite small.

There is a big expectation from both the audience and the advertising community for us to perform well immediately. The audience won't tolerate anything that is of a lesser standard than they can see elsewhere. Airey summarises: She later admits, however, that at least one show in her schedule is a "real turkey".

Airey has already revealed Channel 5's programming hand quite extensively, placing emphasis on its user-friendly "stripped and stranded" approach to scheduling and its heavy reliance on American imports. Britain's first daily soap, *Family Affairs*, will run at 6.30pm; a celebrity gossip show at 7pm; nature and wildlife programmes at 7.30pm; the news at 8pm; leisure and lifestyle shows at 8.30pm and a nightly movie at 9pm. It is hardly earth-shattering stuff.

Where advertisers believe that Channel 5 seems most likely to make its presence felt is at the margins of its schedule, in the afternoon and late



Dawn Airey believes there is "an expectation to perform well immediately"

at night. These are areas where the existing terrestrial channels have a patchy record. Although the audiences are small at this time of day, in absolute terms, Channel 5 is well placed to do well in terms of audience share.

Airey describes her mid-afternoon programme, *Five's Company*, as a "high-energy gang show" presented by bright young things and offering chat, celebrity interviews and games and quizzes that the audience can play at home. "It will have the feel of a radio phone-in show on television," Airey says.

"All the existing broadcasters now recognise that there's a potentially large audience in the afternoon. I tried to cater for it when I was at Channel 4 with *Love in the Afternoon*, which was aimed at young housewives," she adds.

Rival broadcasters have already taken note and begun to schedule competitively against

Channel 5. "Channel 4 has just launched *Pet Rescue* and *Collectors' Lot* in the afternoons, and ITV has gone into the afternoon on a network, not a regional basis. That is a direct result of us. All of those shows are catering for an older audience, and yet half the audience available to view at that time is under 50," Airey says.

The other slot where advertisers believe that Airey has placed herself in a strong position is post-11pm, which has a distinctly "young urban male" feel. Airey hopes to achieve every day at this time what Channel 4 and BBC2 have already achieved on Friday nights. That is, to create a raft of youth-orientated comedy programmes aimed at those too young to be in bed but too satisfied with life to be out trying to change the world. At 11pm, Jack Docherty, the

Scottish stand-up comedian, has been given a chat show based on the American David Letterman format. It will include more celebrity guests, live music, scripted gags and topical chit-chat. The potential returns of such a show are high, particularly given the lack of any real competition in the evening chat show stakes. However, previous attempts to introduce Letterman-style programmes into the UK have failed miserably, even with presenters as experienced as Danny Baker and Jonathan Ross, so the Docherty strategy is a risky one.

The programme will be followed by several strands of risqué comedy programming, such as monologues by Jenny Eclair, a sketch show called *We Know Where You Live*, a celebrity quiz show *Bring Me the Head of LE* (Light Entertainment) and a medical quiz show, *Tibs and Fibs*. Although Airey won't say

so, the shows are clearly expected to push the boundaries of taste and decency to the limits and to take Channel 5 beyond the audience that actually watches it. With few light alternatives on the rival channels, the slot might just be one where the channel's audience share rises above the 5 per cent which Airey says she is aiming for overall.

Airey is also pinning her faith in Channel 5's nightly showbiz gossip programme, *Exclusive*, presented by the Virgin Radio DJ Jonathan Coleman. She intends to generate publicity for the show by feeding titbits from it — (yet more) celebrity interviews, star scandals, Hollywood casting tips etc — to the tabloid papers. "I expect the programme to result in stories in the press every day."

She denies that the programme will run out of ideas. "Every day there are five terrestrial channels and 30 odd satellite channels. There are masses of stories concerning the stars," she says.

A joker in the pack for Airey may well prove to be the channel's Saturday evening prime-time light-entertainment show, *Night Fever*. Based on a format bought in from the French broadcaster TF1, it has all the madcap exuberance and intellectual paucity of Chris Evans's *Don't Forget Your Toothbrush*. The programme, hosted by the Madness singer Suggs, pits celebrity teams against each other in a topical quiz, punctuated by karaoke singing contests, where the audience — including those at home — is expected to join in. It is daft, but it might just catch on.

Claiming that she always wants to offer an alternative to the other main channels, rather than present them with head-to-head competition, Airey says she has no intention of copying Channel 4 and BBC2 by running themed seasons. Instead, she is hoping to run evening events around a major special event, such as the British Fashion Awards, one of the few glamour events still not given the full TV treatment.

Magnus Linklater on a Scottish circulation drive

Flying Scotsman carries the banner of devolution

AS commuters emerged from mainline stations in London on Monday morning they were greeted with an unusual sound. Instead of the roar of the traffic, they heard the skirl of the pipes. This was not, as you may imagine, the result of some uncompleted Jacobite business from 1745, it was a marketing exercise: the launch of *The Scotsman* as a properly distributed national newspaper in the South East. From this week, late editions of a publication which calls itself Scotland's National Newspaper will be flown down from Edinburgh to London, reaching the warehouses early enough for it to be on sale in newsagents alongside the London-based nationals.

Scottish news, opinion and up-to-date football results, will now be available on breakfast tables in Mornington Crescent as well as Morningside for the first time since the paper was founded in 1817.

It is the fulfilment of a dream long held. Hitherto *The Scotsman* has trudged down by train, arriving too late to reach any but a scattering of outlets. Its London sale, as a result, has rarely risen above 1,200, and frustrated expatriates have wearied of complaining about its absence. As Editor, I argued fruitlessly for a London print run, but came away defeated by the cost.

The paper's current owners, the Barclay Brothers, have deeper pockets. Initially the paper will be flown down at considerable expense. Later, the idea is to print in London. Plans for a reciprocal arrangement with the *Financial Times* have come to naught, but there are other irons in the fire.

The question now is: what will it achieve, and whose interests are being served? The immediate circulation objectives, as outlined by the paper's Editor, Martin Clarke, its Editor-in-Chief, Andrew Neil, and its Chief Executive, Bert Hardy, are modest: possibly 3,000 to 5,000, rising to 10,000 in a few years. On purely financial grounds that hardly counts as a worthwhile exercise. A similar investment in Glasgow, where the paper currently has only a wretched 6,000 circulation, would produce better results.

But London is where the paper's owners would like to make their mark. They want *The Scotsman* to be talked about as a national rather than a regional paper, they want it to feature on the *Today* programme, they want it to be noticed.

And so it should be. In the run-up to a general election and in its aftermath, Scottish devolution will be a key issue. To be able to read about it from a Scottish perspective in London should be invaluable for anyone who believes there is intelligent

life north of the Wash. On the other hand, the idea that *The Scotsman* might become a latter-day *Manchester Guardian*, fulfilling a need for a non-metropolitan voice in the South, is probably unrealistic.

At the point where *The Guardian* went "national" in 1961, it already had more than 40,000 readers in the South, with every evidence that this was only the tip of the iceberg. In today's television age, there is unlikely to be a huge demand for a paper from the north, outside a small circle of Scottish exiles, and institutions with an interest in Scottish markets and politics. My bet is that a gain of 5,000, modest as that may sound, is about the right target.

Of more concern to its existing readers is the paper's political stance. It has long been axiomatic that *The Scotsman* is the voice of devolution, a left-of-centre, decentralist, radical paper, representing the broad consensus of Scottish opinion, out of sympathy with successive Tory administrations, and committed to political reform. That may all be about to change.

Monday's edition announced that the Labour's plans for a Scottish parliament to be "gravely wounded" because of its failure to answer the West Lothian question. The idea that Scottish MPs should be allowed to debate English matters at Westminster while English MPs had no say over Scottish issues is, the paper argues, dishonest and unworkable. It therefore proposes an answer: Scottish members should have no vote when it comes to deciding English issues at Westminster. "Let the English control their own affairs," said its banner headline. And its leader made it clear that "nothing else will do".

Both Tories and Scottish nationalists have expressed their delight at this solution. But the notion that Tony Blair will agree to gag his Scottish backbenchers, to say nothing of his Scottish-dominated Cabinet, is absurd. It would mean, for instance, that Gordon Brown, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, would be unable to vote on a Bill concerning hospital provision in the South East or investment on Merseyside. It is, in short, every bit as unworkable as the issue the paper dares to address.

What the new line does raise, however, is another question altogether: could *The Scotsman* find itself lobbying for a "no" vote in Labour's referendum on a Scottish parliament, thus incurring the wrath of its readers? After all, it could hardly endorse a constitutional scheme for the future government of Scotland which, by its own admission, was fatally flawed.



Monday's edition: available in London

EXCLUSIVE OFFER AND COMPETITION THE TIMES

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Times readers have the chance to win the Kiani rattan furniture suite pictured right which is manufactured in Indonesia. The suite, consisting of a two-seater sofa, two armchairs and a coffee table, and valued at £1,890, is called Sri-Kandi and is the latest design to be added to the Kiani rattan furniture range.

Rattan grows like ivy and regenerates within ten years so it is ideal for producing eco-friendly furniture and its characteristics are strength and durability.

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a) Indonesia b) Sri Lanka c) Thailand



The line is open until midnight tonight. Winners will be chosen at random from all correct entries. Normal TNL rules apply. 0839 calls cost 50p per minute. See tomorrow's Times for a home painting course prize.

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The Times offers you a FREE ticket, worth at least £7.50, for the first ever BBC Good Homes Show at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, from April 9-13. Collect three differently numbered tokens and send them, with a stamped sae marked on the front with which day you wish to attend and the application form which will appear again on Saturday. Your name will automatically be entered into a prize draw to win the Miele kitchen, right. You can see live performances of BBC shows in the Lloyds Bank Insurance Direct Celebrity Theatre. Call 0121 767 4000

to pre-book theatre and show admission tickets. For a Miele brochure call 01235 554488.

THE TIMES
THE BBC
GOOD HOMES
SHOW
TOKEN 3

CHANGING TIMES

Blair is in tabloid heaven

It was an "historic" announcement, said *The Sun* as it declared its support yesterday for Tony Blair and New Labour — and the treatment of the story by other editors suggested that the claim was no exaggeration. It made the two main television news bulletins, *Newsnight* and the *Today* programme, and was reported on the front pages of *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent* and the *FT*.

With *The Mirror* also endorsing Blair — but now forced to declare itself as the paper for "Labour's TRUE supporters" — the electoral map of Britain's national newspapers has been decisively redrawn compared with 1992, when *The Sun* continually derided Neil Kinnock as a potential Prime Minister. If the *Daily Star* votes with its readers and eventually opts for Labour — and my bet is that it will — all three mass-market tabloids will be backing Blair.

The *Sun* has ten million readers a day. *The Mirror* has six and the *Daily Star* has two million. Even if the *Daily Mail* and *The Express* eventually endorse the Tories, Labour will be supported by three papers with a 3-1 majority of the 24 million tabloid readers. Yet does the support of *The Sun* really matter to Tony Blair? Do newspapers really help to win elections? Since Blair and Alastair Campbell, his press secretary, have fought so hard to win *The Sun's* endorsement, one answer is that it obviously does matter to them — and



they ought to know. Although it cannot be scientifically demonstrated, that is because journalists and politicians (especially) believe that what readers absorb from their papers day by day must have some effect, especially if it is relentlessly derogatory.

It can, however, be demonstrated that *The Sun's* hostility to Kinnock in 1992 may well have influenced its readers to vote Conservative in several crucial marginal seats (see Simon Jenkins on page 18). MORI polled voters throughout the election and found a sharp swing to the Tories in the last four days as *The Sun*, *Mail* and *Express* launched a front-page blitz against Kinnock.

Among Labour's main target seats were Slough and Hayes, where *The Sun* is read in nearly one in two homes. Among *Sun* readers, the swing to the Tories was 4 per cent. Assuming that they were influenced by their paper, the *Sun* effect delivered 1,104 votes in Slough, where the Tory majority was 514, and 732 in Hayes, where the Tory majority was 514.

John Major can, nevertheless, be cheered that more than three million readers of *The Sun* voted Labour at the last election despite its vitriolic campaign against Kinnock.

which suggests that what they read in their newspaper did not affect their vote.

Another achievement by Blair has been to persuade the editors of newspapers that have traditionally been Labour's enemies that he leads a party that at least has a

"Nor will there be any 'Nightmare on Blair Street' in *The Sun*, which could — just conceivably — tip over to Blair on election day."

ANTI-TORY VOTE

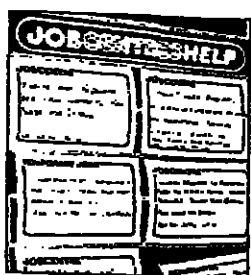
	1992	1997
The Sun	50	63
Daily Mail	33	45
The Times	35	54
Daily Star	66	67
FT	33	44
The Independent	71	84

Source: MORI

claim to power. Even *The Daily Telegraph* said yesterday that Labour was no longer a disgrace or a joke. As the *Daily Mail* described the Tories as "jaded, fractured and rudderless", it added that Blair had rendered his party "electable with a vengeance". The result — with *The Sun* for Blair, the *Mail* impressed

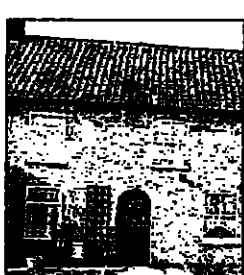
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TODAY



BUSINESS

Do the numbers
add up in the
jobless count?
PAGE 29



HOMES

The country cottage
where John Major
lived as a baby
PAGE 41



SPORT

Sweet revenge:
the day Guscott
broke loose
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TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
PAGES
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WEDNESDAY MARCH 19 1997

Sink in kitchen sales takes shine off Limelight shares

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

LIMELIGHT, the kitchen company that came to the stock market in a controversial flotation last November, saw its shares plunge 25 per cent yesterday as it disclosed a dramatic fall in kitchen sales.

The shares, which had already fallen 17 per cent on Monday, ended the day down 35p at 107½p, against the flotation price of 175p.

Limelight said group sales in the first quarter of this year are down 11 per cent on a year earlier. The problems at Moben Kitchens were particularly bad, with sales down 32 per cent. In the same period last year, its sales rose 74 per cent.

Moben's weakness was partly offset by Kitchen Direct, whose sales rose 17 per cent. In 1995, Moben Kitchens and Kitchens Direct accounted for nearly 40 per cent

of group sales. Their combined total this year is down 24 per cent.

Limelight's kitchen was twice criticised by the BBC's *Watchdog* programme in December, and the company is taking legal action. Ashley Lewis, finance director, agreed that the programmes could have affected sales. "There could be a link," he said.

Sales of Dolphin fitted bathrooms, which share the same show-

rooms as Moben and which accounted for 18 per cent of sales in 1995, were down 11 per cent on last year. Sharps bedrooms and Portland conservatories are the only divisions trading satisfactorily.

The company ran into controversy last year over the role of Stephen Boler, former chairman and the company's creator. He resigned the chair before flotation and became a non-executive director. He sold the

bulk of his stake when the company came to the market, raising around £60 million to invest in an African safari park. He still holds 17 per cent. No new money was raised for Limelight in the float.

The company said yesterday that its forecast of operating profit before exceptional items of £16.5 million in the year to December 31 has been met. It will give more details with preliminary results on April 3.

Limelight may decide to bring its results announcement forward, but it is hampered by the absence of its chairman, Andrew Thomas, who is overseas. A spokesman noted that weakness in the fitted kitchen market had been highlighted by MFI. However, MFI recently reported like-for-like sales growth of more than 7 per cent.

Pennington, page 27

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET
INDICES

FTSE 100 4398.8 (-18.5)
Yield 3.70%
FTSE All share 2125.56 (-8.48)
Nikkei 16445.20 (+381.70)
New York 6940.00 (-15.48)
S&P Composite 792.70 (-3.01)

US RATE

Federal Funds 5¼% (5¼%)
Long Bond 6.875% (6.875%)
Yield 6.875% (6.875%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank 6¼% (6¼%)
Libor long gilt 110½% (110½%)
Future (Jun) 110½% (110½%)

STERLING

New York 1.5895* (1.5885)
London 1.5890 (1.5873)
DM 2.6957 (2.6921)
FF 6.9987 (6.9494)
Sfr 2.2682 (2.3147)
Yen 194.82 (195.22)
£ Index 95.7 (96.1)

US\$ DOLLAR

London 1.5730* (1.5820)
DM 5.6485* (5.7000)
FF 1.4395* (1.4605)
Yen 122.47* (122.75)
£ Index 104.0 (104.5)

Tokyo close Yen 123.14

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jun) \$19.80 (\$19.45)
SOLD

London close \$346.85 (\$340.55)

* denotes midday trading price

BG faces writedown of £5bn on assets

By CARL MORTISHED

BG, which owns the British Gas pipeline network, could be facing a £5 billion writedown of its assets.

Expectations that the Monopolies and Mergers Commission will adopt the Ofgas valuation of the Transco pipeline network mean that BG may be forced to consider whether there has been a permanent impairment of the economic value of Transco's assets.

Such a move could also have implications for the pipeline company's profits as accounting rules may not permit BG to cut its depreciation charge in line with the asset reduction.

The book value of the Transco assets is about £18 billion, recorded in BG's current cost accounts and filed at Companies House but Ofgas has adopted a regulatory asset value for Transco of about £12.5 billion. The difference is at the heart of the dispute between BG and its regulator.

City analysts have been probing BG's management to find out what the company will do to its balance sheet if the MMC adopts the Ofgas regulatory asset value. The company is believed to be in talks with Price Waterhouse, its auditors, over the dilemma.

The problem is compounded because BG works on current cost accounting rather than historic cost and, in a period of low inflation, there are few comparatives for dealing with the notion of permanent asset impairment. BG will have to decide whether the economic value of the assets has been impaired and whether the change is permanent.

Even more serious for BG is the possibility that the company's reporting of profits may be affected by an asset writedown. Price Waterhouse is believed to have advised BG that it may not be able to reduce its depreciation charge in line with the reduction in

asset value. Under current cost accounting, it is thought the depreciation charge must reflect the real cost of sustaining the asset base.

The cost of sustaining Transco's 2,500 kms of pipelines and other facilities are at the nub of the dispute between Ofgas and BG. By reducing the value of the asset base, the regulator has disallowed a large portion of the amount set aside by BG in its accounts for renewing the assets. In so doing, Ofgas arrives at a lower regulated income for BG in its pricing formula.

The asset writedown alone is unlikely to disturb City analysts. Ordinarily, such a move would be followed by a profit upturn. Concerns about regulatory risk and windfall taxes have led the stock market to value BG at a big discount to even the Ofgas asset price of £12.5 billion.

The market value of BG is currently about £7.5 billion or almost £12 billion including its debts. Analysts attribute a value of some £4 billion to BG's upstream and international businesses, suggesting a market worth for Transco of only £7.5 billion, well adrift of the regulatory value.

However, suggestions that the depreciation charge against profits will not be reduced has serious implications for BG's dividend. The company has already indicated that it will distribute all of Transco's profits.

BG's management have been battling on several fronts in their effort to win concessions from the regulator and now from the MMC. Alongside the question of asset valuation is operational cost. The City is expecting BG to win some extra income from the MMC, in the range of £100 million to £150 million in the form of an allowance for higher operating costs.

Temps, page 28



Peter Kindersley, chairman and chief executive of Dorling Kindersley, which aims to sell more of its books through its door-to-door network

Borrowing within target and City expectations

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

PUBLIC borrowing looks set to undershoot the Government's Budget forecast this year after another month of healthy tax receipts.

The public sector borrowing requirement totalled £3.6 billion in February, according to the Office for National Statistics. This was lower than the City had been expecting and left cumulative borrowing in the first 11 months of the current financial year at £14.1 billion, against £22.2 billion at the same stage last year.

Even excluding privatisation proceeds, there has been a substantial improvement on last year. Ex privatisation, the cumulative PSBR in the 11 months of the financial year so far was £18.3 billion, compared with £24.5 billion in the previous year.

Most economists are now predicting a substantial undershoot of November's official prediction of a £26.4 billion PSBR for the full year, perhaps in the order of £2 billion to £3 billion.

Martin Brookes, of Goldman Sachs, said yesterday that the buoyancy of tax receipts also augurs well for a continuing fall in the PSBR

next year. He is predicting a PSBR in the 1997-98 financial year of £19 billion.

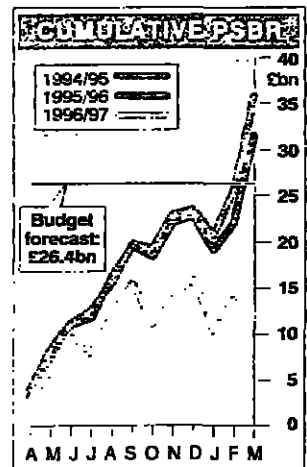
Central government cash receipts are up 7.4 per cent on the year, against the 5.7 per cent increase predicted in the Budget. All of the main revenue categories — income tax, corporation tax and VAT — are running above target.

However, Jonathan Loynes, of HSBC Markets, put yesterday's positive news into context, noting that, even if this year's PSBR were to total only

£23 billion, this would still be almost twice as large as was envisaged by the Government only two years ago. "Hence we continue to believe that the next Government would be well advised to tighten fiscal policy at some point," he said. "As well as improving the public finances, this could help to ease the upward pressure on sterling by minimising the need for further rises in interest rates."

The pound struggled again yesterday, largely because of strength in the mark. Sterling's effective index against a basket of currencies dropped to 95.7 at the close, from 96.1 on Monday. By the close in London, it had lost 1.54 pence to DM2.6667.

The mark has been boosted in recent days by increasing doubts about the single currency going ahead on schedule. Klaus-Dieter Kühnacker, a member of the Bundesbank's policy-making council, said yesterday that he doubted that Germany would meet the Maastricht convergence criteria and that delaying the start of monetary union was the only option if that were the case.



Dorling Kindersley hit by profit warning

DORLING KINDERSLEY, the publisher, saw £36 million wiped from its market value yesterday as a profits warning sent its shares down 16 per cent (Fraser Nelson writes).

The company said its US business had been hit by book superstores cutting stocks by ordering only four weeks in advance, instead of 12. The company aims to re-

cover by selling more titles through its own door-to-door network, but it said the switch will hit this year's profits.

Pre-tax profits in the six months to December 31 were £6.78 million (£6.23 million), and earnings per share were 5.9p (5.1p). An interim dividend of 1.5p is due on May 23. The shares closed at a three-year low of 270p yesterday.

VAT concern

A National Audit Office (NAO) report today reveals weaknesses in value-added tax collection from large organisations that could be losing the Treasury millions each year and called for greater scrutiny. Page 26

Acquisitive

Charter Group, the conglomerate, said it was considering further acquisitions but declined to comment on market speculation it was sizing up Howden, the industrial farmer. Page 27; Temps Page 28

Investors urged to sack poor board performers

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

SHAREHOLDERS should try to sack company bosses who do not merit their pay, directors' leaders say today.

The advice by the Institute of Directors that poorly performing company directors should be fired is the furthest that a leading business organisation has gone in putting forward proposals to reform boardroom pay.

The IoD, whose Director-General, Tim Melville-Ross, was a member of the Greenbury inquiry into directors' pay, today publishes a research paper on directors' remuneration, making clear that business still has a number of concerns about the issue.

The institute says it is for shareholders, and especially institutional shareholders, to bring pressure to bear on the remuneration committees of companies if they disagree with their recommendations. The IoD says: "Specifically, shareholders should oppose the re-election of directors who do not, in their

view, merit their remuneration." The institute also urges directors to offer themselves for re-election on a regular basis, perhaps every three years.

The research paper highlights the institute's concern about so-called "remuneration ratcheting" — pay being constantly moved up by means of the "machinery of trying to ensure that a company's directors are in the upper quartile of pay". Attacking this as "indefensible behaviour", IoD leaders say it "brings discredit on business", and urge company remuneration committees to reject it.

Business organisations, including the IoD, have long urged companies to link pay directly to performance, including pay at boardroom level. While the institute is still advocating this, it says it is "disappointing" to note that most empirical evidence so far suggests there is only a "weak link" between pay and performance.

Barclays seeks approval for lucrative incentives

By ROBERT MILLER, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

BARCLAYS is to seek shareholder approval next month to give 60 "key" executives at BZW, its investment banking arm, lucrative new compensation packages to reward superior performance.

The radical US-style pay proposal in the Barclays annual report, published yesterday, relates to a BZW long-term incentive plan for 60 directors and executives of the investment banking division. If shareholders approve the plan at the annual meeting on April 22, the bank will pay generous bonuses linked to the performance of BZW and the Barclays share price.

To qualify for the incentive plan the BZW executives will have to wait three years to receive their payouts, which will be in Barclays shares, not cash.

Barclays, which last month unveiled a 13 per cent rise in annual pre-tax annual profits to £2.4 billion, said in its annual report that the total value of

18 directors' payments had almost doubled to £5.6 million from £3.2 million the previous year.

The largest sum was paid to Bill Harrison, chief executive of BZW, who joined last September and who earned a one-off £2.9 million as the price of luring him from Robert Fleming, Martin Taylor, chief executive of Barclays, saw his total 1996 package rise to £820,000 from £685,000. Andrew Buxton, chairman, received a £24,000 pay rise to £506,000. Lord Lawson of Blaby received £31,000 in his role as non-executive director.

Mr Taylor has already stated that he has enough confidence in the bank's risk system for BZW — which contributed £204 million to profits last year, against £289 million previously — for the investment bank to take on more. His view is that "high risk is not necessarily bad risk".

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ALLIED DUNBAR

Hoskyns attack on EMU 'folly'

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SIR JOHN HOSKYNs, chairman of Burton Group, launched an attack yesterday on the single currency project which he said will cost business millions of pounds, whether or not Britain joins.

Speaking at the Retail Week and British Retail Consortium annual conference in London, he said: "That effort and expenditure will be at worst premature, at best — wasted altogether. But one way or another, it will have to be spent and spent early."

Sir John is the latest in a series of businessmen to enter the debate on whether Britain should join a single currency. Niall Fitzgerald, chairman of Unilever, and Chris Haskins, chairman of Northern Foods, are among those who have urged early entry.

However, Sir John, head of the Prime Minister's policy unit in 1979-82, said supporters of monetary union are pursuing the creation of a single European federal state. "The eventual aim is to turn it into a new superpower to rival the United States, Japan and the new economies of the Far East."

The contribution to the debate from big business has been disappointing, he said. "Big business seems to have accepted, unthinkingly, the idea that EMU is a low-cost, low-risk device which will remove exchange rate risks inside Europe without any damaging side effects. That is a naive view."

Sir John added: "I think the single currency will happen in some form, but I hope I am wrong. The best we can hope for is a small core... Whatever the final outcome, we can be pretty sure that the dream of the larger project will not be abandoned until it has done as much damage as it can do, to the greatest number of people... I hope and pray that we stay out of this folly."

Audit office fears weakness in VAT system costs millions

By ADAM JONES

A NATIONAL Audit Office (NAO) report today reveals weaknesses in VAT collection from large organisations that could be losing the Treasury millions each year.

Although the report was largely complimentary about Customs and Excise, which collects VAT, the NAO said that dozens of big organisations may not have been checked rigorously enough.

Its report focused on large traders, bodies that pay an unusually large amount of

VAT, or are judged to have particularly complex accounts.

They are seen as a riskier source of revenue and, as value-added tax is a self-assessed tax, the liabilities they calculate are checked more closely than usual.

In 1996 Customs and Excise identified 1,500 large traders that contributed £11.4 billion, or 34 per cent of the total net VAT collected in the UK.

The extra checks carried out by Customs and Excise revealed £300 million in additional monies owing. The

amount varies enormously from case to case, but the average additional VAT charge resulting from large trader checks is about £200,000.

However, in a sample of 652 traders with more than £50 million of VAT flowing through each of them a year, the NAO said that 40 should have been subject to the tougher checking regime but were not classified as large traders. It added that they may have received inadequate scrutiny.

The report said: "A number

of initiatives are in development which will further improve the department's arrangements for large traders. Nevertheless, there are some ways in which these arrangements could be made more efficient and effective."

Customs and Excise is to conduct a "comprehensive" review of the 40 traders as part of a wider package of tweaks. It is also looking at differences in the way that local offices approach large trader checks.

The NAO report showed large variations in the amount

of resources used to carry out the audits. Collectors in north-west England put proportionately more resources into an average large-trader check than almost any other region.

In the North West, the monitoring of a typical local authority, a significant class of large trader, used almost four times as many resources as the same procedure in south-east England.

A Customs and Excise spokeswoman said: "We are undertaking a review of methods that are being used by local offices."

Wolseley wary on housing markets

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

WOLSELEY, the builder's merchant, yesterday sounded a cautious note about the UK housing market, which it says remains fragile, and about the US housing market, which it expects to slow down in the next six months.

The company also noted that the strength of sterling is likely to cost it around £4 million in the second half.

The group made a pre-tax profit of £124.3 million in the six months to January 31, up from £111 million a year ago.

First-half earnings were boosted by buoyant business conditions in the US, but the Austrian and French markets remained weak, and progress in the manufacturing division was hit by sterling's strength.

Richard Ireland, chairman, said that housing starts have slowed in the US recently. "It

is likely that the rate of growth will slow during the second half, since our companies experienced an upturn in the equivalent period last year," he said.

Wolseley will pay an interim dividend of 3.3p (3.1p) on July 31.

The company says that the UK housing market is reasonably buoyant in the South East, but patchy elsewhere, and the effects of a rise in housing starts are not likely to be felt until later in the year.

"Consumers may be reluctant to increase expenditure to any great extent until after the election," the company said, adding: "Whilst the margin trends are improving, compared with the second half of last year, there are still substantial pressures throughout the supply chain."



John Young, Wolseley chief executive, yesterday

Societies Bill expected to pass test

By ANNE ASHWORTH

THE Building Societies Bill, which gives wider powers to the building societies, will go to the Lords today after an unopposed second reading in the Commons yesterday.

Some peers object to the haste with which the Bill is being rushed through Parliament in the dying days of the

Government. They argue that this speed leaves too little time for debate.

However, Treasury sources now expect no obstacles to the Bill passing into law, as it has the support of Labour and, in particular, the support of Mike O'Brien, the Shadow Economic Secretary.

If all goes according to plan in the Lords, the Bill should

return to the Commons for its final stages tomorrow.

Some of the societies that are becoming banks this year have been fiercely opposed to the Bill. At present, societies that join the stock market can rely on a five-year period of protection from takeover. Under the terms of the Bill, this protective shield will be lost if the society makes a bid

for another financial services business. Those societies wedded to their traditional mutual status have supported the Bill, as it will allow them to compete more directly with banks and diversify into new areas. Currently, a society can only have an agency in a rural post office. If the bill is passed, the society will be able to operate the post office.

SIB delays disciplinary shake-up

By ROBERT MILLER

PLANS to pin responsibility for "catastrophic" financial or supervisory failures on senior executive officers have been put "on hold" on the orders of the Securities and Investments Board (SIB), the chief City watchdog.

The Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), regulator for brokers and futures dealers, had planned to publish details of its consultation exercise on how the watchdog proposed to switch the burden of proof in disciplinary cases. But yesterday the SFA said that its proposed refinements would not be issued until "we know that our proposals are in line with the SIB's standards."

The SFA sought to beef-up its rules in pinning responsibility on senior managers in the wake of the Barings crash. It was stung by criticism that it was unable to discipline Peter Baring and Andrew Tuckey, previously chairman and deputy chairman of the bank. The watchdog decided that in future senior managers would have to demonstrate that they had not been negligent rather than the watchdog proving the case.

The SFA said that despite the delay it "will continue to stress the responsibility of senior management for the control and compliance environment of their firms".

Pennington, page 27

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Delta sets sights on finding new markets

DELTA, the cables company, said yesterday that although its restructuring plans are progressing it would be concentrating on developing new markets, especially in Asia and Eastern Europe. With low gearing of 22 per cent it was well positioned to drive growth through acquisitions and organically, Jon Scott-Maxwell, the new chief executive, said.

Mr Scott-Maxwell's comments came as Delta revealed a 14 per cent fall in full-year pre-tax profits to £45.6 million. Turnover fell 7 per cent to £950 million. The total dividend is unchanged at 18.9p a share (14.4p final). Delta took an exceptional charge of £5 million to cover the rationalisation of its plumbing and circuit protection businesses, and a further charge of £6.6 million to cover the cost of loss on disposals.

BSG to sell dealership

BSG INTERNATIONAL, the car parts manufacturer and car dealership, is to separate its two core businesses by selling Bristol Street Companies, the car dealership, to a management buy-out team for £72 million. BSG will buy 20 per cent of the new equity in the buy-out company for £6 million. BSG, which will change its name to Britax International in May, reported pre-tax profits for 1996 of £19.28 million, down from £24.05 million a year earlier. A final dividend of 2.75p (2.5p), payable on July 1, will give a total of 3.52p (3.2p).

Meggitt back in black

MEGGITT, the engineering and aerospace group, returned to profit in 1996 after a major restructuring last year. Pre-tax profit was £24.5 million, compared with a loss of £21.5 million in 1995, when the group closed two business units and sold 12. Earnings per share were 7.3p in 1996, against a loss of 13.4p in 1995. The final dividend rises to 2.85p, from 2.63p, making 4.2p (3.93p). At the year end, order intake was 8 per cent up on the previous year. The order book for delivery in 1997 was 17 per cent higher than at the same time last year.

Wagon shares slide

SHARES in Wagon Industrial fell 20.1p to 286p yesterday as the engineering group announced a dividend cut and a £35 million bill to cover the cost of restructuring. Underlying profits for the year to March 1997 are expected to fall to about £20 million (£27 million). Wagon intends to pay a final dividend of 5p to make a total of 12p, a reduction from 19.8p. The share-up at Wagon follows the appointment of David Kendall as chairman at the start of the year. The company said it intended to focus on engineering businesses with good growth prospects.

Heal's to raise £14.3m

HEAL'S, the furniture retailer, will have a market capitalisation of £21.3 million when it is floated on the stock market next week. The company is to raise £14.3 million from a placing of 6.73 million existing and 1.43 million new shares at 175p each. Dealings will begin on March 24. The flotation will provide £1.8 million for the company, while five directors will share £2.3 million. NatWest Ventures, which backed the 1990 management buyout, will claim the rest with the disposal of its entire shareholding. Tempus, page 28

Watmoughs disappoints

WATMOUGHS, the printing company, announced disappointing results yesterday, saying conditions in the print media sector remain difficult after paper price increases. Pre-tax profits fell to £22.2 million, from £23.7 million in 1996. Earnings per share fell to 21.7p a share, from 23.8p. The total dividend is raised from 9.5p to 10.45p, with a final of 7.7p. Patrick Walker, the chairman, said: "The market for paper is much more stable and there is evidence of new launches and greater buoyancy from publishers." Tempus, 28

Card Clear expands

CARD CLEAR, the credit card verification group, is to expand into America with the \$10.5 million acquisition of a similar company there. Transaction Billing Resources (TBR), based in New Jersey, runs a "hot card" database used by payphone operators who check credit card transactions before connecting the call. TBR processes about 700,000 transactions a month and last year made profits of \$500,000 on sales of \$3 million. Shares of Card Clear rose 2p yesterday to a high of 47p on the Alternative Investment Market.

Irish Nationwide up

THE Irish Nationwide Building Society lifted annual pre-tax profits to just over Ir£24 million from Ir£22 million in 1995. The record growth in lending to Ir£240 million reflects the continuing buoyancy of the Irish housing market. The society reported a 14 per cent increase in total assets to more than Ir£1 billion, with a 12 per cent increase on reserves to Ir£133 million. The society's cost to income ratio dropped last year to 32 per cent, from 34 per cent in the previous year.



NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given that a Special General Meeting of The Bristol and West Building Society (the 'Society') will be held at 11.00 a.m. on 15 April 1997 at the Westex Conference Pavilion of the Royal Bath & West of England Society Showground, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 6QN for the following purposes: To consider and, if thought fit, to pass the following resolution which will be proposed as a Special Resolution:

INVESTORS' RESOLUTION

- 1 That:
 - (A) the transfer of the whole of the Society's business to Reading Mortgages plc (to be renamed Bristol & West plc); and
 - (B) the terms of such transfer set out in and pursuant to the Transfer Agreement dated 26 February 1997 made between the Society, The Governor and Company of the Bank of Ireland and Reading Mortgages plc, as such terms and/or Agreement may for the time being and from time to time be amended:
 - (i) to the extent that any such amendments are not material, by agreement between the Society, The Governor and Company of the Bank of Ireland and Reading Mortgages plc; or
 - (ii) at the direction of the Building Societies Commission pursuant to section 98(5) and (6) of the Building Societies Act 1986,

To consider and, if thought fit, to pass the following resolution which will be proposed as a Borrowing Members' Resolution:

BORROWERS' RESOLUTION

- 2 That:
 - (A) the transfer of the whole of the Society's business to Reading Mortgages plc (to be renamed Bristol & West plc); and
 - (B) the terms of such transfer set out in and pursuant to the Transfer Agreement dated 26 February 1997 made between the Society, The Governor and Company of the Bank of Ireland and Reading Mortgages plc, as such terms and/or Agreement may for the time being and from time to time be amended:
 - (i) to the extent that any such amendments are not material, by agreement between the Society, The Governor and Company of the Bank of Ireland and Reading Mortgages plc; or
 - (ii) at the direction of the Building Societies Commission pursuant to section 98(5) and (6) of the Building Societies Act 1986,

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

M Anthony Langdon
The Secretary

Members of the Society may obtain copies of the Transfer Document which contains the Resolutions and statements relating thereto and proxy voting forms from the Society's Information Office, PO Box 27, Broad Quay, Bristol BS99 7AX. Freephone 0800 886633.

Banks agree code on 'rescue culture'

By ROBERT MILLER, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

MORE than three million small businesses, sole traders and partnerships are to be protected by a new binding code of conduct unveiled by the high street clearing banks.

The British Bankers' Association (BBA) yesterday announced that its members, including NatWest, Barclays, Lloyds TSB, Midland and Royal Bank of Scotland, have agreed to a 12-point code, which comes into force on July 1 and is designed to cover how banks work with smaller businesses in difficult times.

Those who come under the protection of the voluntary plan will have an annual

turnover lower than £1 million, which covers 96 per cent of the 3.6 million registered companies and partnerships, and they are also eligible to take any complaints to the Banking Ombudsman.

Mike Young, the BBA executive responsible for the code, said: "This is a further step in the development of the rescue culture."

From July the banks have promised to emphasise the need for both sides "to get the relationship right from the start: the benefits of taking early independent advice and taking action when things go wrong".

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buy	Bank Sell
Australia \$	2.11	1.86
Austria Sch	19.96	18.36
Belgium Fr	58.27	53.97
Canada \$	2.38	2.127
Cyprus Cyp£	0.837	0.782
Denmark Kr	10.61	10.01
Finland Mk	8.65	8.00
France Fr	9.45	8.80
Germany Dr	2.84	2.63
Greece Dr	441	415
Hong Kong \$	12.96	11.96
Iceland	120	100
Ireland Pi	1.07	0.99
Israel Sh	5.85	5.00
Italy Lit	2640	2540
Japan Yen	209.70	193.70
Malta	0.446	0.393
Netherlands Gld	3.168	2.938
New Zealand \$	2.44	2.22
Norway Kr	11.41	10.61
Portugal Esc	207.00	202.50
S Africa Rd	7.62	6.82
Spain Pta	239.00	222.00
Sweden Kr	12.91	12.11
Switzerland Fr	2.44	2.28
Turkey Lira	209600	196000
USA \$	1.622	1.550

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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□ Societies do well by doing good □ A minor victory for United Biscuits □ SFA makes a late leap for the bandwagon

A virtue out of necessity

□ "ONE-OFF, unrepeatable offer! Regular customers, just get to your local branch of J Sainsbury or Asda this weekend and load your trolley up with cash! No catches, no hidden extras! This offer not available at branches of Tesco or Sainsbury."

Too good to be true, alas. Instead we have had to rely on our local building societies to outdo each other in displays of generosity to members of the public prepared to stick with them. Windfalls from the Halifax and the Woolwich in return for the freedom to convert to public status are one thing. This week two of that dwindling band with no ambitions to become banks or financial supermarkets are also claiming to be handing back £100 million to customers.

But the sweeteners on offer from the Yorkshire on Monday and the Bradford & Bingley today are an inspired example of making a virtue out of a necessity. For example, these and Nationwide's £200 million per year "customer benefits initiative", about half of profits, can be seen as the cost of dividends societies would have had to pay to shareholders, if they had any as public companies. Instead the money is paid to their effective shareholders, that is, members, as higher interest to lenders and lower mortgage rates.

This allows non-converting

societies to operate with a built-in pricing advantage. The supermarkets have loyalty cards, effectively delayed discounts of 1 per cent or so. That £200 million, or £45 million in the case of the Yorkshire and whatever from the B&B, means a mutual can on average cut mortgage rates by 0.35 per cent and raise the amount paid to lenders by the same degree, and still match the retained profits pulled in by one of the new banks.

Given this in-built advantage, customers should gradually migrate from the converters offering worse rates to the remaining mutuals. They should grow their 20 per cent share of the mortgage market at the expense of those newly converted banks with stock market quotes to service.

Except that this would suggest that the good guys might finish first, and that can never happen, can it? So what can go wrong?

Customer inertia might prove so overpowering that the converters can continue to charge what they like. The latter's new shareholders might insist on action before market share is eroded, by cutting costs,

closing branches and behaving like any other bank, so allowing margins to begin to compete with the offers from the mutuals.

Many of the 60 or so mutuals expected to survive might grow so lazy and so inept from their protected status, like lions at the zoo whose hunting instincts have become atrophied, that they can no longer be bothered to seek out market share.

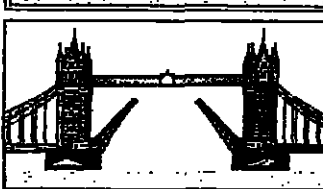
They might turn out to be the Co-op rather than John Lewis, and scant competition for Sainsbury. A few years of managed decline, and a quiet implosion — and all we are left with is the big supermarkets and banks.

P-p-pass off a Penguin

□ YES, yes, the big four supermarkets did change most of our lives for the better in the 1970s and 1980s. Now they control more than half of all food sales and are becoming as bad a bunch of over-mighty subjects as top trade unions were before. And look what happened to them.

Hard-pressed United Biscuits

PENNINGTON



has won a minor victory against Asda. Archie Norman, Asda's self-promoting boss, developed a brand-beating Puffin chocolate biscuit with strangely similar packaging to UB's Penguin. UB has won an injunction against the passing off, although nothing will happen pending appeal. UB's counsel noted drily: "There is no inherent connection between maritime birds and chocolate biscuits."

Asda said this was just a bit of fun and UB a humourless spoilsport. But nothing could be more deadly than the blatant use of monopoly power to override intellectual property rights. This lesson is one of the first that Western countries try to inculcate in former communist states.

Few manufacturers can afford to stand up in court to the big four, who can wipe their products from the shelves.

Coca-Cola challenged Sainsbury more than two years ago. The grocer finally changed its own-label cola can. The dispute spawned a code of conduct agreed between manufacturers and retailers requiring the latter to "avoid commercial plagiarism in packaging and trade dress".

This code appears to carry about as much authority as the unions' social compact with Lord Callaghan, which ended up with the winter of discontent. Kellogg's complained bitterly over Tesco's lookalike own-label cornflake packets.

Unilever, which spent millions developing and protecting the daftly named "I can't believe it's not butter", was not pleased by Asda's "You'd better believe it" spread. Grand Metropolitan, which spent much brainpower developing a new market with its Malibu coconut liqueur, nearly choked on Asda's Windward.

Eighteen years after the winter of discontent, Labour abhors strikes. But the Tory candidate

for Tunbridge Wells (not Tawton) seems to think property is there for the taking, or at least for the passing off.

One watchdog not having its day

□ WHEN a rogue trader runs amok, senior management should be brought to book by the relevant civil watchdog — if the latter is allowed to act unhindered. When the Securities and Futures Authority said it could not proceed against Peter Baring and Andrew Tuckey over management failures at Barings, there was almost universal condemnation and the so-called "Tuckey gap" was born.

So the SFA tried to address this by putting the burden of proof on senior managers to demonstrate why they should not be held responsible for the failings of juniors. The approach had already worked well for another regulator, Imro, in the Jardine Fleming case. At Morgan Grenfell even the threat of Imro action over Peter Young was enough for seven managers and super-

visors, and some very senior ones at that, to leave the firm.

But the decision by the Securities and Investments Board, yet another of this teeming band of regulators, to intervene in the debate looks suspiciously like a late bid to jump on the bandwagon. The SFA desperately needs to strengthen its rules, in particular to deal with the NatWest Markets incident. A delay for the chief watchdog to publish its mere thoughts on the matter, not even detailed rules, note, is helpful to nobody.

Our back pages

□ "WHAT is clear is that Mr Boler has become exceedingly wealthy while those who enter into deals with him tend to lose out," this column wrote on November 15, as Stephen Boler brought his Limelight Group to the stock market and pocketed £60 million. "As he is selling shares, do you want to be buying them?" And oh, how the company complained. Investors who paid 175p for shares now worth 107½p might ponder which of us was right. And NM Rothschild and Cazenove, respectively banker and broker, after one of the shortest gaps between prospectus and profits warning in corporate history might wonder how much longer they need decently stick around.

Charter silent as talk turns to Howden

By CARL MORTIMER

CHARTER GROUP, the conglomerate that owns Esab, the Swedish welding equipment business, is considering acquisitions but is refusing to comment on speculation that it is sizing up Howden, the industrial fanmaker.

Profits at Charter fell from £103 million to £47 million owing to the exceptional loss on the sale of its 65 per cent stake in Cape, the building products group — after the write-back of goodwill previously written off the balance sheet. Operating profit from continuing businesses rose from £89 million to £92 million, with an 8 per cent gain in profits from Charter's rail track equipment business.

Charter is seeking to add a third division and could spend between £250 million and £500 million on acquiring a new business. Speculation that a bidder is pursuing Howden, capitalised at almost £280 million, centred on Charter but the company would not be drawn. At the year end, after the Cape disposal, Charter had no debt and cash resources of £35 million.

Esab made profits of £77 million, up 4 per cent, and maintained its margin at 10.5 per cent despite the effect on exports of a strengthening Swedish currency. Demand in southern Europe and the UK was buoyant but sales were disappointing in Germany and France. Esab has closed its welding consumables factory in Germany. In September, the company announced a joint venture in Brazil between Esab and that country's leading welding consumables producer. Charter is raising the dividend 7 per cent, to 29.5p per share, after earnings of 70.9p, up 5 per cent.

Good sales of a new clip for fastening rails to sleepers helped the rail track equipment business to raise profits 8 per cent last year. The device reduces sleeper installation cost and is aimed at railroad customers seeking to reduce manning. The company makes only 3 per cent of its revenues in the UK but has a contract from Railtrack for seven new Stoneblowers.

Tempus, page 28

Britannic Assurance plans Peps

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

BRITANNIC Assurance, the door-to-door life and pensions office, plans to diversify into lending and unit trust Peps.

Brian Shaw, chief executive, said that offering Peps would increase Britannic's presence among wealthier savers, and developing a credit business would benefit the bulk of its existing 1.2 million policyholders, who needed another source of borrowing because many had no bank account.

Britannic had a setback in its move into home insurance, in which policyholders fell slightly, to 170,000, last year.

Overall, new regular premiums rose by 7.7 per cent, to £37.1 million, and new single premiums increased by 16.8 per cent, to £137 million.

Operating profit before tax rose 66 per cent, to £34.2 million, aided by a £23.2 million transfer after a settlement with the Government on "orphan assets". As part of this, the company is paying a 23p final dividend, making 28p.

CRT pays £23.8m for rival

By FRASER NELSON

CRT, the training and recruitment company, has become the lead player in computer staff contracting after buying IKPG, its rival, for £23.8 million. The deal was the first fruit of the £100 million cash injection that CRT gained last August by selling a controlling stake to a team of American businessmen.

Karl Chapman, chief executive, said: "We now have phenomenal ability to out-invest our competitors." With £75 million of the capital injection left over, he would be "disappointed" if CRT did not buy another company this year.

CRT is paying up to £16.9 million in cash, the balance in loan notes and paper. In the year to September 30, IKPG made underlying profits of £500,000 on sales of £45.1 million. It is expected to add about 40 per cent to CRT's business.

CRT's shares gained 3½p to 235½p yesterday.

Shake-up costs put Claremont into red

HIGHER than expected reorganisation costs meant Claremont Garments, a major clothing supplier to Marks & Spencer, dived £3 million into the red last year, the company revealed yesterday (Sarah Cunningham writes).

The cost of closing its Glasgow factory and laying off 600 staff were £7.6 million against expectations of £6 million. Added running costs during the reorganisation took a further £2 million off profits, according to Peter Wiegand,

chairman and chief executive. The result was a pre-tax loss in the year ended December 28 of £3.05 million compared with a profit of £12.9 million a year earlier.

Cost savings from the reorganisation will not begin to appear until the second half of the current year.

The company is maintaining its final dividend at 5.25p, payable on July 1, for a full-year 9.87p (9.65p).

The company's shares slid 17½p to 152½p.

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THE FIRST COMMUNICATIONS
COMPANY FOR THE WORLD

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MCI

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STOCK MARKET MICHAEL CLARK

BG puzzles the pundits with a mystery 5p rise

WHAT is going on at BG, brokers in the Square Mile were asking themselves yesterday as shares in the now demerged British Gas defied a falling market to make a useful gain on the day.

By the close of business the price had shaken off recent nervousness to finish 5p better at 173.1p in heavy turnover that saw 17.5 million shares change hands.

The decision to demerge British Gas into two separate companies, BG and Centrica, was the brainchild of its accident-prone management. But the City has never fully shared the company's enthusiasm for the manoeuvre. Even so, the flurry of activity in the shares suggests that something is afoot and that some much-needed good news may be at last on the way for long-suffering shareholders.

Elsewhere, shares prices continued to extend this week's losses, reflecting political uncertainty in the run-up to polling day on May 1, fresh losses in bonds and the recent retreat by the pound on the foreign exchange.

The equity market managed to recoup half of its earlier losses, with the FT-SE 100 index closing 16.5 down at 4,350.8. It was 33.2 down at one stage. Total turnover reached 836 million shares, bolstered by a large number of bed and breakfast transactions to establish tax losses before the financial year end.

The weak pound is likely to be good news for British Steel, up 4.1p at 185.1p, which was also benefiting from the proposed offer of DM435 million from Krupp-Hoesch for Thyssen, the rival steelmaker. ICI lost more ground in the wake of Monday's profit downgrading by Kleinwort Benson, the broker, ending 15p lower at 761.5p after touching 766.5p.

The strong pound has also taken its toll on Dorling Kindersley, the publisher, to the tune of £1.5 million. In the first six months it cost the group £800,000. The share dropped 3p lower at 270p. The strong currency is also causing problems for Servotek, 22.1p down at 387.1p. Profits last year grew 30 per cent to £35.5 million.

BAT Industries closed 1p cheaper at 517.1p after the latest victory in a Florida court by the anti-smoking lobby. But the group's success at imposing a 4 cents a packet

increase on cigarettes has been well received. Shares of Flextech tumbled 64.1p to 686.1p as brokers continued to reflect on this week's proposed link-ups with the BBC. The two have agreed to develop a number of new digital subscription channels. In a second joint venture they will acquire 65 per cent of UK Gold, currently owned by

BT shrugged off renewed worries about windfall taxes that would be imposed by a Labour Government, to finish 6p dearer at 442p as £3.4 million shares changed hands. It follows Monday's presentation for brokers to discuss prospects after the acquisition of MCI. The brokers came away bullish.

Flextech, and develop the business. The Flextech share price was also depressed by the sale of £7 million worth of shares in the company by Roger Luard, chief executive.

Royal Doulton, where Stuart Lyons is deputy chairman, achieved a solid increase in profits last year despite increased competitive markets in both Britain and the US. Profits at the fine china group

were up 15 per cent at £17.6 million. The shares rose 3p to 289.1p.

English China Clays continues to reel from the poor reception given to this week's profits news with the price losing 7.1p at 200p. Kleinwort Benson is reckoned to have cut its forecast for the current year by £4 million to £65 million. A price war appears to have

broken out among the music retailers with the likes of Tesco, down 3.1p at 333.1p, and Safeway, up 4.1p at 345p, reported to be adopting an aggressive price-cutting policy on CD albums. EMI Group dropped 15p to £11.65 and WH Smith was 19.1p lower at 459.1p.

British Vita was 1p lighter at 206.1p. Earlier this week Bob McGee, chairman, paid

6.1p better at 106.1p after announcing plans to pay a special dividend of 5p.

GILTED-EDGED: The London bond market continued to lose ground, but outperformed most of its overseas rivals. Brokers reported a flattening of the yield curve as losses among shorter dated issues matched the longer dated stocks.

The Bank of England plans to auction a further £2.5 billion of Treasury 7.4 per cent 2007 next Wednesday.

The June series of the long gilt ended seven ticks lower at £110.52 as a total of 63,000 contracts were completed.

Treasury 8 per cent 2015 shed four ticks at £103.52 as Treasury 8 per cent 2000, which closed at £103.52.

NEW YORK: Interest rates remained foremost on the minds of investors and shares were subdued. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 15.48 points lower at 6,940.00.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday)	
Dow Jones	6940.00 (-15.48)
SEP Composite	702.70 (-3.01)
Tokyo	
Nikkei Average	18445.20 (+31.70)
Hong Kong	
Hang Seng	12748.91 (-89.62)
Amsterdam	
BOE Index	741.73 (-11.62)
Sydney	
AO	2404.3 (-23.1)
Frankfurt	
DAX	3291.10 (-99.40)
Singapore	
Strait	2124.29 (-10.94)
Brussels	
General	11895.35 (-104.8)
Paris	
CAC-40	2573.95 (-14.4)
Zurich	
SKA Gen	943.80 (-6.70)
London:	
FT 100	4350.8 (-16.5)
FTSE Mid 250	4661.5 (-30.5)
FTSE 250	4155.0 (-4.4)
FTSE Euro Stoxx 100	2146.86 (-17.30)
FT All-Share	2125.56 (-4.46)
FT Non Financials	2181.3 (-8.2)
FT Financials	1182.5 (-0.8)
FT Euro Stoxx	44.58 (-0.13)
Bargains	91745
SEAQ Volume	836.7m
US\$	1.5876 (+0.0029)
German Mark	2.6643 (+0.0174)
Exchange Index	95.7 (-0.4)
Bank of England official rate	4.00
LECU	1.1568
RPI	154.4 Jan 12.8% Jan 1987=100
RPIX	153.9 Jan 0.1% Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Aortech	120p	- 2
Aurora Inv Trust	100p	- 1
Birmingham City	49p	-
Cambridge Mini Res	14p	-
Centrica (75%)	60p	-
Core Group	297p	- 27p
Dobbies Garden	260p	-
Energy Group (52%)	495p	- 5p
Clarendon Csh Sys	188p	-
Howle	30p	-
M & G High Capital	9p	-
M & G High Income	68p	-
M & G High Pkgs	100p	-
M & G High Unit	78p	-
Nord Angio Educatn	150p	- 2p
Pad Group	100p	- 2
River & Merc UK	100p	-
Screen	5p	-
Technoplast	112p	-
Usher of Twbridge	120p	-
VFG	41p	-

RIGHTS ISSUES

Granchstr n/p (137)	37p	- 2
PTS n/p (110)	20p	- 1p
Parit n/p (300)	34p	-

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
Wilson (C)	188p (+15p)
Roboro	214p (+16p)
Grasby	189p (+11p)
371p (+14p)	
Euro Income	215p (+10p)
Clyde Blowers	361p (+10p)
Irish Perm	605p (+10p)
Britannic	871p (+12p)
FALLS:	
Lineight	107p (-35p)
Dorling Kind	270p (-51p)
Reliance Sec	112p (-13p)
Manders	170p (-15p)
Grasby	189p (-25p)
Wagon Ind	269p (-20p)
Chemring	155p (-10p)
Jarvis	228p (-12p)
Logica	977p (-45p)
Capita	775p (-32p)
Parity	540p (-21p)
Regent Inns	330p (-10p)

Closing Prices Page 31

TEMPUS

Discord in the pipeline

IT WILL surprise no one that accountants are getting into a tizzy about BG's assets. Ofgas, the company and the stock market cannot agree on a value and there is every possibility that the MMC will come up with another figure, probably different from the one it blessed four years ago.

The well-rehearsed argument between Ofgas and BG over the value of its pipeline network was about depreciation — Ofgas believed that BG was providing too much in its accounts for the replacement of the installed base. It should work on a pay as you go basis and therefore when bills are low, it needs less income to service the network.

In the Platonic world of utilities regulation, the regulator fixes a price so that the net present value of the cash flow equals the regulatory value of the business; that in turn

should equal the market value, in this perfect world. Unfortunately the market is ignoring both the £18 billion book value of Transco and the Ofgas regulatory value of £12.5 billion. The market says that BG, plus its debt, is worth about £11.5 billion. Deduct about £4 billion for exploration and the Global Gas business and the pipeline network is worth £7.5 billion, a discount of almost 40 per cent from the Ofgas price.

If the market is wrong, BG is a screaming buy at these levels. The other alternative is that Ofgas is wrong and the market is pricing the risk that BG will never be able to meet the Ofgas assumption on cost reduction. Either way, there is now a risk that the market will be further upset by a huge asset writedown and maintained depreciation charge. Sid will not be amused.

slow until Esab gains a strong position in Asia. Revenues rose only 3 per cent last year in Europe; Esab is unlikely to gain much ground in Germany and France where it is fighting the market leader.

That does not detract from Charter's strength. Double-digit margins and a return on capital of 18 per cent should be the envy of any equipment maker. The trouble is that Charter is being valued as if it were a weaker beast. Its market value, less cash, is less than five times its earnings before interest, tax and depreciation. Failure to get a target in its sights, could well leave Charter looking down the other end of the barrel.

Charter needs a new business to get its earnings growth back into double digits. Esab, the Swedish welding equipment company, is a strong performer, earning double-digit margins, but sales growth is likely to be

Watmoughs does a big line in colour printing for the UK media sector. So when newspapers and magazines sneeze, Watmoughs catches a cold. The latest annual results show the company has yet to recover from a nasty infection it caught during the recent media recession when input prices rose dramatically.

Despite winning a new contract to print a section of The Sunday Times, profits are disappointing and well below historic levels. It now looks likely that these levels will remain unattainable in the future. The newspaper industry has changed beyond recognition since Watmoughs started life in 1888 printing a journal on rabbit breeding.

Watmoughs was protected from the rougher climate as long as times were good. But when advertising rates were squeezed during the 1990-92 recession and input prices

rose, the company felt the full brunt of cost-cutting. The Watmoughs board should also be concerned over the growth of electronic media. While the British public will continue to read newspapers well into the next century, there must be a fear readership will continue its long-term decline. So far post-war readership of national newspapers has held up at around 14 million. This is partly due to newspaper price cuts, which need to be financed with cost savings. Bad news for Watmoughs.

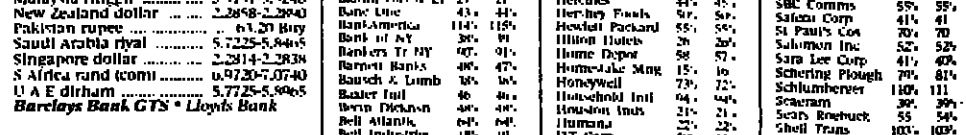
Heal's stores are fine places to walk around. They stock good-quality, expensive, well-designed furniture and a reasonable range of kitchen knick-knacks.

Another nice thing about the stores for browsers is that they are rarely crowded. There is a very good reason for this: relatively few people are able — or willing — to pay

the price of a bird's eye maple coffee table. Heal's is timing its flotation well. More people are moving house. Interest rates are low and consumer confidence is growing. Many retailers — jewellers, for example — have noted a tendency for consumers to move upmarket. But come a downturn, furniture spending will be cut and homeowners now fondly dreaming of a Heal's sofa will slope off to Ikea.

The successful flotation of Harvey Nichols last year has given confidence to small but high-profile retailers. But the extent to which conditions are now in their favour should not be underestimated. The price of 175p per share, giving a historic price-earnings ratio of 17.4 times, is not greedy. But the placing of Heal's shares will mean that they will be tightly held and illiquid. This is not the stock for a punt on the retail sector.

EDITED BY CARL MORTSHED



COMMODITIES

LIFFE			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
COX	105.50	105.50	105.50
COX	105.50	105.50	105.50
COX	105.50	105.50	105.50
COX	105.50	105.50	105.50
COX	105.50	105.50	105.50

ICM-LOR (London 6/00pm)			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Brent 15 day (May)	10.25	10.25	10.25
Brent 15 day (Jun)	10.25	10.25	10.25
WTI 15 day (May)	11.35	11.35	11.35
WTI 15 day (Jun)	11.35	11.35	11.35
WTI 15 day (Jul)	11.35	11.35	11.35

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Wheat	102.00	102.00	102.00
Wheat	102.00	102.00	102.00
Wheat	102.00	102.00	102.00
Wheat	102.00	102.00	102.00

LIFFE POTATO (L/E) (Unit)			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
High	102.00	102.00	102.00
High	102.00	102.00	102.00
High	102.00	102.00	102.00
High	102.00	102.00	102.00

LIFFE BIFFEX (High L/E 500 p)			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
High	102.00	102.00	102.00
High	102.00	102.00	102.00
High	102.00	102.00	102.00
High	102.00	102.00	102.00

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Alumina	102.00	102.00	102.00
Alumina	102.00	102.00	102.00
Alumina	102.00	102.00	102.00
Alumina	102.00	102.00	102.00

LIFFE OPTIONS			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Call	102.00	102.00	102.00
Call	102.00	102.00	102.00
Call	102.00	102.00	102.00
Call	102.00	102.00	102.00

FTE INDEX (4/35M)			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350

FTE INDEX (4/35M)			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350

FTE INDEX (4/35M)			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350

FTE INDEX (4/35M)			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350

FTE INDEX (4/35M)			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350

FTE INDEX (4/35M)			
Mar	Apr	May	Jun
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350
4350	4350	4350	4350

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	110.26	110.28	110.20	110.25	7900
German Govt Bond (Bund)	100.25	100.27	100.23	100.24	3740
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	125.00	125.02	124.98	125.01	2000
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	125.00	125.02	124.98	125.01	2000

Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Three Mth Sterling	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500

Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
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Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
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Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
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Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
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Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
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Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
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Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500
Three Mth Eurodollar	0.573	0.575	0.571	0.574	500

Period	Open	High	
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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Leslau chases screen dream

IT HAS been a busy week for Nick Leslau. Only 24 hours after announcing his decision to take Noddy to America, the chief executive of Trocadero yesterday staked his claim to open Europe's first Pepsi IMAX 3D cinema. Towering five storeys high and spanning the width of an Olympic swimming pool, the £6 million state-of-the-art cinema is to be housed in the Piccadilly leisure complex.

In the crossfire

ROGER BOOTLE came under fire at Bloomberg's bonfire to discuss the proposition: "New Labour, New Government". Sandwiched between William Waldegrave, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and Labour counterpart Alistair Darling, HSBC's chief economist was clearly caught in the middle. A bearded Darling sniped at Bootle, who was acting as compere: "You're doing your Liberal role-playing, just like Paddy." Waldegrave retorted: "No, he's not at all like Paddy, he's very sensible." Ouch.

Smouha reward

WHO better to keep an eye on finances at The World Bank than Brian Smouha? As a reward for taking on two of the most sensational banking scandals in recent history — Banco Ambrosiano and BCCI — the Deloitte & Touche partner is to become lead auditor to the Bank. One major plus for Smouha, who recovered some 90 per cent of Ambrosiano's assets, is that he can resign as the Luxembourg liquidator to BCCI. He also gets to relocate to Washington. Virtue, as they say...



"£30 off our electric bill — how much will that be in windfall tax?"

Bookies buzzing

BOOKMAKERS flew into a spin after the news that The Sun is to back Blair. Ladbrokes moved the number of seats Labour will win from 364-370 to 372-378. Meanwhile, City Index has upgraded the number of seats predicted to be won by Labour from 365-371 to 373-379. Punters appear to have a different view, however. Since the opening of trade yesterday morning, they were busy buying the Tories (predicting more than 238 seats) and selling Labour (predicting less than 375 seats).

INSPIRED by Marjorie Scardino's mission statement on Monday, Dennis Stevenson has upped his stake in Pearson. The incoming chairman of the media and leisure group bought another 30,000 shares, adding to the first tranche he bought from former managing director Frank Barlow.

Viscount Lords it

TONY BLAIR's economics spokesman stepped into Lord Marsh's shoes yesterday as chairman of Lopex. Viscount Tom Chandos, a former corporate finance director at Kleinwort Benson and executive director of Bots & Company, will take over from Lord Marsh, the former Cabinet Minister in Harold Wilson's administration and chairman of British Rail, who now sits as a cross-bencher in the Lords.

MORAG PRESTON

Seek and you will find truth on jobs is hard to work out

Philip Bassett surveys the battle lines drawn in the dispute over how to count unemployment



Official figures have reported unprecedented numbers getting on their bikes

Widespread scepticism about the validity of unemployment statistics will erode much of the goodwill that government ministers might have expected to enjoy from two months of upbeat news about the jobs market during the election campaign.

While ministers are confident that new figures today will show a further decline in seasonally adjusted unemployment, business and the City reserve judgment because of a key change in benefits, which makes it much more difficult to gauge what is really going on in the labour market.

United Kingdom unemployment has been on a clear downward trend since reaching a high of 2.98 million in December 1992. But the Government's decision to change radically the principal state benefit available to people who have lost their jobs, scrapping the old unemployment benefit and replacing it with the Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), blurs that trend.

The monthly unemployment figures are widely used as a "count of unemployment", which is one thing they are not. What they are is an administrative byproduct of the count made on a particular day each month of people who are receiving benefit because they are unemployed.

When governments decide to reform a state benefit, a change in figures often results. This is the root of the charge that unemployment figures have been altered at least 30 times since the Conservatives came to power in 1979. They have, but what has not been proven is the intent: the Government says it is to improve the benefits system, while its opponents say it is to reduce the dole queues artificially.

The change to JSA was so fundamental — essentially, shifting to means-tested benefit after six rather than 12 months, with the allowance itself tougher to obtain — that neither ministers nor Whitehall officials knew what effect it would have on the figures.

Though the monthly falls in unemployment had been accelerating as JSA started to come into effect for new claimants, no one was prepared for the sharp jump in the monthly decline when the full effects of JSA came into being last October.

After an average fall in the jobless of 19,300 over the previous six months, the drop in October was 45,600. November witnessed the biggest fall in unemployment for a quarter of a century, when the count fell by a massive 95,400. December's drop was a large 46,700, while last month's was

the second largest for 25 years, at 67,800. "We thought we might get one month's hit," acknowledges one senior Whitehall figure. "We didn't think we'd get this."

The sheer scale of the falls — the drop from October onwards is the same as the total fall for the previous year and a half combined — is making business and the City suspicious, let alone the Government's political opponents. More than a quarter of a million people have come off the count since October.

Sudhir Junankar, associate director for economic analysis at the Confederation of British Industry, says: "We have to take these figures with a very large pinch of salt."

Bank of England officials agree. The Bank's last inflation report was sceptical, suggesting that even the not-yet fully compatible unemployment figures from the Government's quarterly Labour Force Survey "imply that the labour market did not tighten as quickly in autumn 1996 as the fall in the administrative claimant count indicates", citing particularly a JSA effect. So what is it? What has been, and is being, the effect of the introduction of JSA on unemployment in Britain?

Inevitably, there are a number of answers, and these are complicated by an inter-departmental row in Whitehall that means the Government having, in effect, two answers. The main views are:

□ Statisticians: JSA has one key effect on the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the

ONS has suspended its estimate of the monthly trend in unemployment, depriving ministers of what might have been a potent weapon in the election campaign. Ministers would like their unemployment ball back — to kick it at the opposition.

ONS officials try to disentangle the impact of JSA into three elements. The first relates to changed office procedures — the time benefit office staff are taking to assess and process claims, given an unfamiliar benefit, and the conversion to a new computer system to process JSA claims. They estimate that the flow on to the jobless count has therefore been lower than would otherwise have been the case, depressing the count by up to 8,000, but they believe these effects will be temporary, as the system beds in. Secondly, they believe a shift to earlier means testing is having an effect on the stock of unemployment. Including a likely 5,000 reduction in today's figure, ONS officials believe that the total impact of this element has been to reduce the claimant count by about 15,000. Thirdly, they cite what are called "behavioural" effects, deter-

ring people from making fraudulent claims, in the way the Government's Project Work "workfare" pilot scheme has done.

The Government yesterday strongly supported Project Work in evidence to the Commons' all-party Employment Select Committee. They may also include the impact of a reduction in postal signing for benefit, and further fraud measures, such as the Benefit Agency's Fraud Hotline, through which benefit cheats are stopped.

ONS officials cannot estimate the impact on the claimant count of these possible effects.

□ Ministers and other Whitehall officials. All this is a bit too cautious for some ministers, who fear they cannot claim the political prize of a rapid fall in unemployment. They insist that whatever the precise statistical impact of JSA, the trend in the fall in unemployment is now decisively different.

Instead of the 15,000 to 20,000 estimate put forward by the ONS, and suspended since last autumn, ministers and their departments believe unemployment is now dropping by up to 30,000 a month. Whitehall departments other than the ONS have been carrying out their own analysis of the effect of JSA since last month's unemployment drop, and their best estimate is that roughly about half the current drop is due to the new benefit, and half due to improvements in the labour market.

□ Independent employment analysts: Job pressure groups take a more sceptical view of the JSA effect. John Philpott, director of the Employment Policy Institute, says the figures "have obviously been affected by the revolution in the benefit regime following the introduction of the JSA".

The Unemployment Unit lobbying group calculates the cumulative effect of JSA so far is some 130,000, suggesting the 253,000 fall since October would only have been 116,000 without JSA, with the average monthly fall only really 29,500, against 64,000 in the official, published figures.

Paul Convery, Unemployment Unit director, says: "The Government should simply stop pretending that this measure represents the numbers of unemployed."

The full effect of JSA will not be known for a while — indeed, job experts are still arguing about the claimant count effect of the Restart programme, introduced in 1996. But it is clear that the clouding of the figures will colour the pre-election debate over jobs.

Ministers have been irritated by this, mainly because the ONS has suspended its estimate of the monthly trend in unemployment, depriving ministers of what might have been a potent weapon in the election campaign. Ministers would like their unemployment ball back — to kick it at the opposition.

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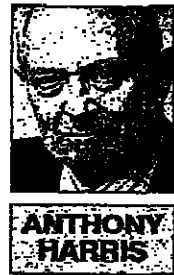
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ANTHONY HARRIS

EMU: danger of wishful thinking

This column is an election-free zone. It shouldn't be. EMU was until recently the issue facing the next Parliament. But now it is the great unmentionable, and not just among politicians. Until recently the bond markets "knew" that EMU would launch on time. Continental bond yields converged, and Sterling was an election play: Labour would take us in, to the benefit of gilts. But now, dither. Convergence plays are unwinding. The election here, Labour leads, but gilt yields are edging up. All bets are off.

Across the Channel, meanwhile, wishful thinking — not my words, but those of a Commission official, describing German economic projections designed to show that everything will be all right on the night. How true Chancellor Kohl, dismissing all doubts, sounds more and more like John Major, who proclaimed Britain's "irrevocable" membership of the ERM — up to the day he revoked it. Anyway, the idea of the Fat Controller missing his own start is appealing in itself, so lips are being licked.

Wishful again. An optimistic forecast can still be right. German near-term growth prospects depend almost entirely on how quickly that economy responds to devaluation; and since Germany has not devalued within living memory (unless you count the dollar bubble in the early 1980s), that is a matter of pure guesswork. Germany could still qualify, at least on the borrowing test. And does strict compliance with the numbers really matter? The Chancellor may like to proclaim that "three means three", but he is talking about keeping Italy out of EMU, not letting Germany in. The Treaty is fuzziest.

It says that a deficit over 3 per cent of GDP will qualify if it is "exceptional and temporary". The 60 per cent limit on the government debt/GDP ratio, which Germany will almost certainly fail to meet, looks less elastic, but the sanction is

not exclusion, but a Commission report on the medium-term outlook. Note that it may also report on those who do qualify "if it is of the opinion that there is a risk of an excessive deficit" — a clear threat to the Club Med countries, which have stormed up the field from nowhere. In theory, this clause could also threaten the likes of France, which qualify through fiscal fudge.

But is this likely? The Treaty sets numbers as targets, but makes the Commission jury; and one cannot imagine the Commission showing a red card to the biggest core members of the EC. The only real political threat to the launch is the qualified majority vote that will give the final verdict. If the Club Med countries are barred, they may have to be bought off — at least with promises. These will be forthcoming. A more distant threat is the emerging opposition to the whole Maastricht project in countries that were once solid supporters. Opponents include, potentially, the German Social Democrats, and a new French party.

But can they really gather enough support to block the launch? Wishful thinking may say yes, but reason says no. EMU still looks an odds-on bet to start on time, though with a skeleton crew for its trials. And what about those trials? Conventional wisdom and the market say that with a hand-picked crew, nothing can go wrong. Charles Goodhart, financial markets guru at the LSE and former voice of reality at the Bank of England, begs to differ.

Trouble, he says, could emerge not slowly, through regional decline, but suddenly, and in the bond markets. National debts, he says in the current issue of *Prospect*, will no longer be the sovereign debt the market knows — bonds subject to exchange-rate risk, but backed by the power to print money. They will carry solvency risk, like Liverpool Docks and Harbour, or New York City, Or, say, Belgium?

Making a case for letting sleeping watchdogs lie

Christine Buckley on how MPs viewed the regulatory industry



Spottiswoode: endorsement

Littlechild: bolstered

tor, could prove a welcome add-on to RPI-X.

A number of companies have opted to offer consumer rebates and voluntary price-cutting. But the problem with voluntary arrangements is that they are ad hoc and at the company's discretion. The water regulator has already experienced intransigence from one company.

An alternative way of curbing profits is to set a rate of return that the company is permitted to achieve on its assets. This form of regulation operates in the United States and is less incentive-oriented than RPI-X, which works to encourage cost savings and efficiencies within companies. But the formula also stands accused of encouraging unnecessary capital investment to secure greater returns.

RPI-X, meanwhile, is criticised for its opposite effect of encouraging short-termism among businesses anxious to deliver immediate savings and productivity increases at the expense of longer-term investment planning.

One area where the select committee has shown more teeth in its recommendations involves the power that regulators have over their industries. It urges an inquiry to discover whether Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, needs more powers to get to grips with the much-criticised electricity pool. The pool — the marketplace for power — and the issue of competition in power-generation have long been bones of contention among large users and region-

al electricity companies. After the last select committee report into energy regulation recommended scrutiny of generators' margins and costs, Professor Littlechild moved ahead with his divestment plans. He may well respond again to this fresh bolstering of the concerns over the extent of competition in generation.

Clare Spottiswoode, the gas regulator, will also be thankful for what amounts to a ringing endorsement of her battles to make public more information about Transco, British Gas's pipeline network. The committee recommends that information regarding a natural monopoly should be

Cowie bus takeover endorsed

The Government has backed the Monopolies and Mergers Commission conclusion that the £300 million takeover by transport group Cowie of its rival British Bus was not against the public interest. John Taylor, Minister for Corporate and Consumer Affairs, agreed with the MMC that, nationally, the takeover could mean more competition, not less. He said London's bus market was regulated enough to guarantee competition, even though Cowie is the capital's biggest private operator. Cowie now controls more than a quarter of all London's buses.

Pathfinder aim

Pathfinder Properties, which owns and rents out housing in London, plans to join the Alternative Investment Market next week. Andrew de Candole, chairman, has put up £750,000 to buy out shareholders who hold stakes through the Business Enterprise Scheme. The company, expected to be capitalised at £1.4 million, will concentrate on home conversions from commercial property. It has already bought a former telephone exchange in Wimbledon, south London, which it plans to turn into 104 apartments.

BT link-up

British Telecommunications will increase its operations in Japan through a joint venture next month with Marubeni Corporation, the Japanese telecommunications business, that will aim to increase the business by offering direct access to global services. BT will have a 51 per cent stake, Marubeni 31 per cent and minority shareholders the rest.

Secure future

Secure Trust, the financial services company, is paying a final dividend of 14p, making the total 20p (18p). Secure's pre-tax profits for 1996 edged higher to £9.4 million. Income from its bill-paying service for consumers rose 10 per cent.



Ian Black, managing director of Wilson Connolly, left, David Lawther, finance director, centre, and Lynn Wilson, chairman

Profits up at Wilson Connolly

By ADAM JONES

PRE-TAX profit at Wilson Connolly Holdings, the housebuilder, rose 17 per cent to £26.4 million in 1996, on the back of the patchy property revival.

Turnover rose to £300 million (£245 million), driven by buoyancy in southern England. In total, 4,154 new homes were sold in 1996, with an increased average selling price of £61,580 (£59,600). Three- or four-bedroom houses accounted for 66 per cent of sales.

But the performance in Scotland — where difficulty in obtaining planning permission hindered growth — and northern England was disappointing, with prices for new homes remaining flat.

A final dividend of 3.44p (3.18p), payable on June 2, and a special dividend of 5p, payable on April 4, are proposed.

Sterling threatens Glynwed's 'first real growth this decade'

By OLIVER AUGUST

GLYNWED International, the engineering group, is benefiting from the strength of the housing market, which has offset the cost of the rise in sterling. The growing number of people moving into new homes has boosted sales of consumer durables.

Volume growth at Glynwed's consumer durables unit reached 15 per cent last

year after declining for seven years. A spokesman said: "This is the first real growth we have seen this decade."

Glynwed is market leader in the leisure cooker market and has seen sales of gas and electric cookers increase across the board. The spokesman said: "Once house sales get under way this pulls through in the consumer durables sector."

But the group gave warning

that export growth was under threat from exchange rate shifts, with the strong pound likely to have a significant effect not only on its operations, but on the UK economy as a whole.

Glynwed is highly exposed to European currency shifts. Of its £150 million worth of exports, £90 million is destined for Europe. It maintains, however, that the rising pound would not necessarily

help its European competitors. A spokesman said the competitors may prefer to raise their prices in order to restore margins squeezed after sterling's free fall after Black Wednesday in 1992.

Nevertheless, Glynwed expects the negative impact of the rising pound on its results to grow in 1997 despite being hedged in the currency markets. In the calendar year 1996, the group's pre-tax prof-

its before exceptionals increased slightly from £84.9 million to £86.4 million. But profits were cut back to £70 million by one-off provisions of £16.3 million. Earnings per share fell to 18p from 25.7p. The dividend was maintained at 12.75p, with the final payment of 8.35p to be made on June 6.

The exceptional charges mainly resulted from provisions totalling £12.5 million for the disposal of Wednesbury Tube, its copper business. The sale was finalised on February 28 and further disposals of non-core units are expected. The group has not made any further provisions so far. At the same time it said it was also looking for "strategic buys".

A further factor limiting profitability during 1996 was the slump in metal prices. Between mid-1995 and mid-1996, prices fell by almost 40 per cent. The spokesman said: "This has hurt profits in our metals distribution division. However, the division is still comfortably profitable."

The pipe systems division incurred one-off costs of £6 million for the integration of Victaulic and the development and launch of a new international product range.

Graseby seeks healthcare growth

By PAUL DURMAN

GRASEBY, the electronic instruments group increasingly concentrating on drug infusion, is in the market for more healthcare acquisitions.

The company expects to clear its £5.4 million of borrowings through the sale of two small businesses that make infra-red sensors and industrial controls. Paul Lester, Graseby chief executive, is

likely to expand the medical division's range of pumps and bags, but would also be interested in closely related areas.

Graseby reported annual pre-tax profits up from £6 million to £10.5 million, its best results for five years. The medical division, strengthened by the 3MIT business bought last July, contributed higher profits of £5 million

(£4.2 million) despite weak demand from the National Health Service.

The technology division, which includes Graseby's chemical weapons monitor, increased profits to £3.2 million (£1.4 million). Having recently won £60 million of contracts from the US and Swiss governments, Mr Lester said the group is now bidding

for a \$400 million contract from the US defence department. The contract, to replace existing monitors with smaller ones, will require Graseby to find a US partner.

The product monitoring division, which made £2.2 million (£3.2 million), is expected to grow slowly but will benefit from cost-cutting. The environmental arm, which saw profits recover to £2.2 million (£1.2 million), may receive a boost from new US legislation. A final dividend of 3.9p, due on May 27, will maintain the total at 6.6p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Cantab and Glaxo link in vaccine deal

CANTAB PHARMACEUTICALS, the biotechnology company, will receive £11 million from Glaxo Wellcome as part of a deal that gives the drugs group exclusive rights to a potential vaccine against genital herpes. Glaxo Wellcome will bear the development costs and will have exclusive worldwide marketing rights over Cantab's DISC HSV vaccine for herpes simplex virus infections.

As well as a £5 million licence fee, Glaxo Wellcome is paying £6 million for a 4 per cent stake in Cantab — equivalent to a price of 965p a share. Jurek Sikorski, Cantab's chief executive, said this was an endorsement of the company's technology. The HSV vaccine is unlikely to be ready for market until 2002. Cantab will receive royalties on sales, in addition to further milestone payments. Sir Richard Sykes, Glaxo Wellcome's chief executive, said he was "very excited" about DISC HSV, which combines "important safety features with the prospect of considerable therapeutic potency".

World Telecom value set

PETER GELARDY, founder of Jazz FM, will become a paper millionaire next week when World Telecom, a phonocard producer, joins the Alternative Investment Market valued at £32 million. Mr Gelardy will have a £3.87 million stake in World Telecom, the company he founded three years ago with Peter Neilson, marketing director, who will have a stake worth £3.68 million. The company's phonocards for executives travelling overseas will be targeted at a broader market. The shares will be priced at 150p apiece.

NLC issues warning

DEEPENING losses at a Lloyd's underwriting syndicate caused New London Capital, the corporate investment vehicle, to issue a profit warning yesterday. It told investors that consolidated underwriting profits are likely to be in line with or below the Lloyd's market average after Syndicate 657 announced a loss of 41 per cent of capacity. New London, which in December predicted that it would beat the average, had a 7.1 per cent exposure to the syndicate in 1996, the underwriting year that forms the basis for its 1996-97 results.

Lopex names new chief

SHARES of Lopex hit a three-year high as the marketing group returned record underlying profits and named Viscount Chandos as its new chairman. Operating profits rose to £3.4 million (£2.25 million) last year. But a £3.8 million provision for future losses on property rentals turned this into a loss of 2.1p a share. The dividend rises 50 per cent to 0.75p, with a final 0.45p due May 23. Viscount Chandos, who resigned from Chrysalis last October, takes over in May. The shares rose 2p to 28p.

Paterson edges ahead

PATERSON ZOCHONIS, the international trading company behind the Imperial Leather soap brand, reported pre-tax profits of £13.97 million for the six months to November 30, up from £13.19 million previously. Earnings improved to 19.25p a share from 16.81p. The interim dividend is lifted to 5.5p (2.65p), reflecting the intention to redress the balance between interim and final payments. The company expects full-year pre-tax profits similar to the previous year's £29.17 million.

Manders holds dividend

MANDERS, the supplier of printing inks and coatings, is holding the total dividend at 11.5p a share for 1996, after reporting a fall in pre-tax profits from £11.6 million to £5.5 million. The company was affected by fierce price-cutting in the coatings and printing inks markets. Results were also adversely affected by a £1.57 million restructuring charge. Adjusted earnings fell to 10.3p a share, from 21.9p. The final dividend is unchanged at 8.4p.

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Swire Pacific

"The Swire Pacific Group is in a strong position and the outlook for the Group as a whole is good."

P D A Sutch

Chairman, Swire Pacific Limited
Hong Kong, 14th March 1997

HIGHLIGHTS

Profit attributable to shareholders	US\$981M	+19%
Investment property portfolio	US\$11,595M	+41%
Net assets per share	US\$8.15	+41%
Earnings per share	US\$61.9	+19%
Dividends per share	US\$22.7	+11%

Notes:

- Amounts per share refer to 'A' shares. Entitlements of 'B' shareholders are in proportion 1 to 5 compared with those of 'A' shareholders.
- All the above figures have been translated from Hong Kong dollars into United States dollars at an exchange rate of US\$1 = HK\$7.80.
- Dividends are declared in Hong Kong dollars.

Earlier losses halved

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1996/97	High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES							
100	100.00	100.00	100	100.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
101	101.00	101.00	101	101.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
102	102.00	102.00	102	102.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
103	103.00	103.00	103	103.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
104	104.00	104.00	104	104.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
105	105.00	105.00	105	105.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
106	106.00	106.00	106	106.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
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110	110.00	110.00	110	110.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
111	111.00	111.00	111	111.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
112	112.00	112.00	112	112.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
113	113.00	113.00	113	113.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
114	114.00	114.00	114	114.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
115	115.00	115.00	115	115.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
116	116.00	116.00	116	116.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
117	117.00	117.00	117	117.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
118	118.00	118.00	118	118.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
119	119.00	119.00	119	119.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
120	120.00	120.00	120	120.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
121	121.00	121.00	121	121.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
122	122.00	122.00	122	122.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
123	123.00	123.00	123	123.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
124	124.00	124.00	124	124.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
125	125.00	125.00	125	125.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
126	126.00	126.00	126	126.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
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132	132.00	132.00	132	132.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
133	133.00	133.00	133	133.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
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227	227.00	227.00	227	227.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
228	228.00	228.00	228	228.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
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237	237.00	237.00	237	237.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
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239	239.00	239.00	239	239.00	0.00	10.00	10.00
240	240.00	240.00	240				

Tel: 0171 680 6806

La Crème de la Crème

Fax: 0171 782 7586

Senior Personal Assistant/Secretary

- to Human Resources Director

c. £20,000 + attractive benefits



London Transport

Are you unfappable, well-organised with highly developed secretarial skills? If so, could you come and cover for a senior secretary who is going to cover a higher graded job for at least three months. This could result in a permanent vacancy but initially is a temporary post.

The job is secretary to the Director of Human Resources at London Transport. This is a busy post where you will be part of a team, working as personal secretary to the Director in a department of 350+ people. You will co-ordinate her diary, prepare papers and organise the filing system and play a high-profile role in the day-to-day management of the department. Hopefully as you get used to the systems you will deal with day-to-day matters yourself and enjoy the bustle and bustle of a busy, demanding environment, where you will often need to work on your own initiative and convey an atmosphere of calm and tranquillity - even when the pressure is on and you have a hundred things to complete before lunch!

If you are an experienced secretary, with good computer skills (Microsoft Office, Excel and Powerpoint), highly developed communication and personal organisation skills and a positive attitude to work and customers, please let us know.

Initially give Sue Cardner a ring on 0171 918 4874 who will talk to you about the job. Please quote reference CDV331/E.

Closing date for applications: 26 March 1997.

Working Towards Equality

FROM SECRETARY TO RECRUITMENT SPECIALIST

ATTRACTIVE PACKAGE

READING

The world's leading software company is looking for a talented and confident administrator to co-ordinate the recruitment process for the HR team and Microsoft business units in the UK. This is a dynamic and fast-changing business involving tight deadlines, competing priorities and a demanding workload.

A strong team-player, IT-literate and with excellent communication skills, you will flourish in an environment which fosters personal initiative as well as high professional standards. Enthusiastic, flexible and assertive, your energy and keen intellect will enable you to hit the ground running.

In return we offer a competitive salary plus bonus and excellent benefits. If you have experience or an interest in the human resources arena, this opportunity represents a very exciting career move indeed.

Could you leap from secretary to recruitment specialist in one go?

Please fax your cv to our retained consultants, Janette Teager & Associates, Human Resource Management Consultants, on 0181-847 5208, or telephone 0181-568 5516.

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Team Secretary

London ECI

£17,025 - £19,599 plus benefits

The Post Office is a unique organisation - a highly commercial group of specialist businesses with a turnover of more than £5 billion, and a track record of success in both the UK and worldwide.

We are now looking for an accomplished and responsible Team Secretary to provide full secretarial support to the Group Financial Controller and finance team.

You will be liaising with senior level managers and directors on a day-to-day basis. Organising diaries and arranging meetings, you will also be providing administrative support for Post Office Board Committees, as well as preparing Powerpoint presentations and reports to tight deadlines.

You must have excellent secretarial skills, including word processing (Word for Windows), audio typing, and, ideally, shorthand. A good knowledge of Powerpoint, and some experience of Excel would be an advantage. You should have excellent organisational and planning skills, and be a confident communicator. In addition, you should be able to maintain a high level of efficiency, courtesy and integrity at all times, and be flexible about your hours of work.

Please send your CV and a covering letter to Nicola Treseder, POSG Personnel, 2nd Floor, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ, or telephone 0171 250 2469. The closing date for applications is 9th April 1997.

The Post Office is an Equal Opportunities Employer. Suitably qualified applicants with disabilities will be shortlisted.



THE POST OFFICE



BORED SECRETARIES.

If you are looking for an opportunity to move away from secretarial, join Foster's Property Management Department. Run your own Property Management section taking responsibility for 100 properties or more, in a progressive fast moving organisation. Must be well educated, hard working, have a great sense of humour, must have a car, a valid driving licence, a good command of English, a well to learn, can drive. Salary £18K-£22K.

Tel: 0171 373 5833.

DIRECTOR'S SECRETARY

West End Commercial Services. A well educated, organised & experienced secretary is required to work with two Directors. Understanding of Word for Windows is essential and a knowledge of Access Database and Excel Spreadsheets an advantage.

The ideal candidate will be over 25 and a non-smoker. Salary £20,000 - £22,500.

Please reply with CV to: Williams Williams, 8 Park Place, London SW1A 1LP.

ENTHUSIASTIC AND SELF-MOTIVATED SECRETARY

For two principals of busy commercial property practice. She will be cheerful, age 25-40ish, n/smoker, have good telephone manner and fast and accurate WP skills (WPS, I/MSWord). Salary c. 18K.

Fax CV on 0171 723 3553 attention of David Blair.

SECRETARY/ADMIN. MAYFAIR

Property finance and investment company seek capable all-rounder with good working knowledge of WAW to support team of 6, supervise junior and keep office organised. £16-18K (possibly more if some SAGE experience). Contact Richard on 0171-409-3080 or write to me at 82 Park St. W1Y 3HQ.

Managing Director's PA Management Team Secretary Office Administrator

London SW7

Telia UK is a wholly owned subsidiary of Telia AB the national telecommunications company of Sweden and provides telecommunications solutions for small and medium sized companies in the UK. Founded on Swedish business values, encompassing high ethical integrity and employee participation in running the business, we are enjoying a period of well-founded and profitable growth in a highly competitive market place.

We now need to fill three key roles to complete our current phase of organisational development. We need a mature PA for our Managing Director. The ideal candidate will be able to demonstrate significant achievement in a similar role, have English as a mother tongue and an excellent level of written and spoken Swedish.

Reporting to our Managing Director is a small highly focused Management Team of four who now also require an experienced Secretary. We need a team player with initiative and excellent organisational skills to work in a fast moving, customer focused environment.

We also need an Office Administrator reporting to the Finance Manager to plan and organise the day-to-day operations of our very busy office.

working closely with our Facilities Manager, Customer Care and IT Support Groups.

The office style is a totally hands on, no nonsense, no politics' teamwork based approach to doing a challenging and exciting job in a calm and thoroughly professional manner. Ideal candidates will therefore be experienced, self-reliant, energetic, flexible, and tenacious with a good sense of humour. Organisational skills, the ability to influence, and excellent knowledge of Microsoft Office / Windows 3.11 are taken for granted. Salaries and benefits are competitive.

Please post, fax or e-mail your CV with a covering letter stating your earnings, career aspirations and key career achievements to Telia's Response Manager, Tony Allen, quoting reference 2457 at Lansdowne, Rosedale House, Rosedale Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2SZ. Fax: 0181 332 6902 e-mail: lansdowne@diapix.com

Telia is an equal opportunity employer.

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Leading Business Communications

PARTNERS' SECRETARY

Salary c£18,000 + benefits available

Fed up with large firms? Have property experience? Min 70wpm audio typing and WAW? - Join our small but lively and busy office of Investment Surveyors.

Send a CV with covering letter to: Miss Joanna Munro, Hoddell Stotbury, 115 Mount Street, London, W1Y 5HD

Strictly no agencies please.

SHORTHAND SECRETARY REQUIRED

Must have 60/100 wpm. If you enjoy working in a fast moving environment, have initiative, stamina and drive, we may have just the job for you. Salary aae.

CVs to: Mary Lamprell, 49 Marylebone High Street, W1M 4ED.

PROGRAMME OFFICER/ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATION

A highly energetic and efficient person is required with good secretarial skills to work in a small busy office. The ability to work in a team is essential. The job involves providing secretarial/administrative support and assisting with the organisation of international conferences (international travel may be involved), follow-up of programmes and general day-to-day running of the office. The ideal candidate would have accurate typing skills (60wpm), excellent organisational and communication skills, plenty of initiative and be computer literate. Knowledge of Word would be an advantage.

Salary dependent on experience.

Apply in writing with CV to: Mrs. Treasurer,

ADIPS, 11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1H 9BN

Deadline 26/3/1997

EXPERIENCED SECRETARY

Urgently required for multinational Aerospace company. Central London office. Experienced Secretary to work for two Executives. Must be adaptable and capable of working under pressure. Computer literacy to include Spreadsheets, Graphics and E-Mail. Excellent Salary

G.L.C. Consultants. Tel: 01252 783465 Fax: 01252 782417.

PA/OFFICE MANAGER

c. £20 - 24,000

An established Corporate Finance House based in Central London requires an outgoing and experienced Office Manager to control a small professional group. Wide range of responsibilities with significant opportunity to develop career in expanding international company.

To apply write with a c.v. to: LMI Associates, Eagle Court, 6-7 St. John's Lane, London EC1M 4BH

LMI ASSOCIATES LTD.

Consultants in Search and Selection

PA/SECRETARY to Managing Director

International travel magazine based in Bayswater, part of a major PLC, requires a top PA to assist its Managing Director. The ideal candidate will be outgoing, well organised and enjoy interacting with colleagues. Previous experience of working at a senior level and the ability to work on your own is essential. Must be computer literate and shorthand would be an advantage.

The right person will earn £20k+. Please apply in writing enclosing full CV stating current salary to Cheryl Davey, Business Traveller magazine, Compass House, 22 Rehan Place, London W2 4SZ, tel 0171 229 7799, fax 0171 229 2191.

PERSONAL ASSISTANT/BOOK-KEEPER

Two Partners, Holborn Circus based, trading company require a capable and organised person to take over all aspects of running a busy office. Computer literacy and some book-keeping experience would be an advantage. Typing skills required for invoices and correspondence although accuracy will serve you better than speed.

This close-knit office needs someone with a sense of humour to make a real contribution. Salary £15,000 + NEB. Please Reply to Box No 3899

SECRETARY/PA

Chief Executive of rapidly expanding company specialising in healthcare seeks bright, enthusiastic secretary/PA to work in fast moving office in W2. If you have a minimum of 5 years experience (including Director level) with skills including Word for Windows and Powerpoint, are aged 28+ with a friendly personality and have the ability to work under pressure and good organisational skills, please apply with your C.V. and a covering letter to: Tamaris plc, 15 Albion Street, London W2 2AS, by Wednesday 2 April 1997.

OFFICE MANAGER - INTERNET COMPANY

Based in Blackheath London, working in a highly co-operative and friendly atmosphere. We are looking for an experienced person who can confidently run office administration and infrastructure support, health and safety, staff leave and attendance control, some PA tasks to the directors, reception duties.

Reporting to the operations director you need to be intelligent, organised, able to work under tight deadlines and with a cool head when under pressure. You will quickly develop a small team, so people management skills would be an advantage. Internet knowledge is not required but familiarity with a PC and office applications is a necessity.

Please send your CV to: Julian Hayward, Direct Connection, 1 Tranquil Vale, London SE8 0SL.

UNFLAPPABLE PA TO CHAIRMAN

Required for an interesting international business based in EC1. This challenging position demands an intelligent, quick thinking, flexible PA with lots of initiative who would be happy working in a small office (no private domain please). We are looking for someone who has excellent organisational & secretarial skills (inc a/s 100wpm & WP 5.1/Win 6 is a must), hardworking, loyal & discreet, aged 25-40.

Salary AAE. Please reply with CV & covering letter to Box No 3678 (no agencies)

PA/RESEARCHER

Required by PO of small international trading Co based close to Baker St station. Must be female, energetic, articulate, audio typing (60wpm). Non smoker. £15,000 plus bonus. Please send CV to: 0171 724 7315. (NO AGENCIES)

SECRETARY WEST END.

2 Directors in the architectural and building services company are looking for a flexible secretary with good written and verbal communication skills to support them in the busy regional and community department. Excel and Powerpoint an advantage. Some salary rev. Send CV to: Hunter & Partners, 25 North Row, London, W1R 1JD

JUNIOR SECRETARY

£15,000 - £16,000



Newchurch & Company

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ROYAL COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNAECOLOGISTS

REGENT'S PARK

SECRETARY TO HEAD OF EXAMINATION DEPARTMENT

£15,647 per annum plus benefits

The College is a membership organisation concerned with standards of training, education and examinations in the medical specialty of obstetrics and gynaecology.

We need an experienced secretary to work for the Head of the Examination Department. The duties include transcription of audio to quality word processing skills are required for Microsoft Word. The person appointed will also help with the administrative and secretarial work in assessing the eligibility of candidates who wish to sit the Membership examination of the College. Attention to detail is therefore extremely important.

The College is located near Baker Street and offers excellent working conditions with a friendly team and a package that includes incremental salary scales, free lunches, pension scheme, interest free season ticket loans and generous leave entitlement.

For details and an application form please telephone Mrs K Dawson, quoting reference number EXAM1, on 0171 772 0238. Closing date for receipt of applications Thursday, 27 March 1997.

(Registered charity number 213280)

PASSIONATE ABOUT ITALY?

Specialist Chelsea Tour Operator requires versatile PA for the Director of their Italian programme. Position involves secretarial duties, day to day programme administration and product research. Good knowledge of Italian and fluent Italian essential, a knowledge of marketing advantageous, salary a.s.e.

Position night suit someone based near Wiltshire/Glouce borders.

Write with full CV to Patricia Cookson, CV Travel, 43 Cadogan Street, London SW3 2PR.

Top salary for top person. (No Agencies)

Partner and Jailed

8 Waltham Way

London W1M 8NB

Tel: 0171 486 7881

Fax: 0171 935 0200

Ash Barry Jailed

Senior Partner's Secretary - Solicitors

Increasing and varied work with emphasis on Commercial Property, in forward looking well equipped West End Firm. Ability to work accurately under pressure (not always with humour) with initiative and responsibility as part of a team.

Write with full CV to Patricia Cookson, CV Travel, 43 Cadogan Street, London SW3 2PR.

Top salary for top person. (No Agencies)

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Write with full CV to Patricia Cookson, CV Travel, 43 Cadogan Street, London SW3 2PR.

Top salary for top person. (No Agencies)

Partner and Jailed

8 Waltham Way

CREME DE LA CREME

Marketing and Sales Secretary to £16,000 (City)

This is a great opening to join a growing company supporting two young managers. Your day will be varied and busy, producing presentations and reports, arranging travel and accommodation. This organisation will give masses of opportunity to someone who has the ability to be proactive and use their own initiative. Skills: 50wpm/ Windows/ Excel/ Age: 20-30. Please call Sam Garner on 0171 390 7000

Crone Corkill
Recruitment Consultants

Graduate Opportunity c.£17,000 plus bonus

This is a one-off opportunity for a recent graduate with secretarial skills to gain experience with a small but leading City fund management firm. Based in fantastic offices, you will be initially based on reception gaining front line exposure to all clients and situations and then developing your role taking on more involved duties and progressing within the company depending on available opportunities. Age: 21-26. Skills: 45wpm typing/strong IT skills. Please call Claire Ashley on 0171 390 7000.

Crone Corkill
Recruitment Consultants

Moving On Up £18-20K + Fab Bens West End

Large international firm of management consultants seek senior secretarial assistants to join their dynamic team. You will have good knowledge of Windows, combined with a strong sense of team responsibility as well as a real eye for detail and boundless enthusiasm. The job content is interesting and diverse with the opportunity to become totally involved. A minimum of 5 GCSE's at C grade and the attitude to succeed are the key. Please contact Susanna Hargreaves on 0171 434 4512.

Crone Corkill
Recruitment Consultants

MEDIA RELATIONS Accounts Assistant £20,000 WC2

'Down-to-earth' - unusual for a successful PR company. If you are too and you enjoy frequent contact with 'blue chip' clients, you're highly organised and well-educated, this is an excellent career move. It's not all glamour, of course - there's still typing, organising travel, diaries etc. Age to late 20's.

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS £18-25 neg SW1

Our client is an influential international management consultancy, a market leader with the highest standards. They need 3 exceptional admin assistants - committed, computer literate team players with flexible, 'can-do' attitudes and decently accurate 60wpm. How do you measure up?

PLEASE CALL 0171 373 7779
JIGSAW
RECRUITMENT



8 Staple Inn London WC1V 7QH
Tel: 0171 404 4655 Fax: 0171 831 7581

RECRUITMENT CONSULTANT £15,000-£18,000 pa

We are an established independent Recruitment Consultancy with a growing list of first-rate clients. The recruitment team is highly experienced and results-oriented. The atmosphere is informal yet business-like and we seek an additional Consultant with similar qualities.

You should be an experienced Consultant with a proven track record and enjoy the buzz of handling a professional team of temps. (Initially maternity cover). Benefits include profit share, PPF, a lovely location and a dynamic, happy environment. Please contact Hilary Watts in confidence to discuss.

WORLD OF INTERIORS £12-£15,000

Let or 2nd job? The opportunity has arisen for someone with an interest in the World of Interiors to work as Secretary/Receptionist within this very prestigious and well-connected company based in SW3. Using your finely tuned office skills you will be meeting Interior Designers and their Clients, putting together quotes and correspondence, arranging flowers, curtains - anything! An excellent training ground to learn about small but expanding business. - £10 + Windows. Age 20-25.

TRUE GRADUATE ASSISTANT £18,000

UK President of High-Growth International Media Corporation needs highly motivated Assistant/Project Co-ordinator to assist in a career in Media. He offers 100% involvement - you could be attending meetings, researching into major projects, policy formatting - as part of a much wider, global Organisation. An interest in the Far East/Asia useful, must have keyboard skills and be computer literate. Age 22-25.

CHELSEA COMMUTING! £18-£20,000

End all that hassle with crowds, tubes, buses etc, and come to work in the fresh leafy streets of Chelsea and Kensington amongst their attractive houses and in their calm village atmosphere. This prestigious, privately owned Estate Agency in SW3 need a PA to organise their highly successful Head of Sales. Sense of humour and self-confidence essential! Aged 25-35. -£60. No Andol!

EXECUTIVE SELECTION! £23,000 + Bonus

A fabulous opportunity has arisen for a PA/Administrator with at least 2 years experience to join this Int'l. Blue-Chip firm of Executive Selection Consultants. Based in W1 you will work alongside 2 successful and likeable Consultants - manage their diaries, coordinate meetings, put together reports, correspondence, liaise in depth with clients and candidates - anticipate their needs and as a result get totally involved. -£60, Windows + Powerpoint. Age 25-28. Low secretarial content!

TEMPORARIES!

Help! Due to expansion we urgently need experienced Receptionists, Secretaries, PA's who would enjoy temping for our clients in the West End, Chelsea and the City. Without exception our Temporary Bookings are treated like Permanent Jobs - we get you work, but work where you feel you fit in, coupled with competitive rates of pay. For more information please ring Diana Anderson.

ANDERSON HOARE
0171 824 8821

Enjoy temping! Want to earn money, find the right permanent job or increase your career prospects?

With Crone Corkill and AIR MILES it's easy!

Our friendly, helpful team of Consultants has lots of opportunities for secretaries with 60+ wpm typing and good windows packages. We'll give you the best hourly rates AND we're the only agency to give all our temps AIR MILES awards. Make your assets take you further - call our Temp Desk NOW and get your career off to a flying start.

Together we'll get you there!

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Crone Corkill
Temporary Recruitment

SLOANE ST TO £16,000

Secretary for varied role in young and established firm. Good typing skills.

CRUISE THE MED SEX. TAX FREE

2 fabulous opportunities to join a young and growing company. 1. As a ship's stewardess. Must have either hotel or travel experience. 2. As a cruise ship's receptionist. Must have hotel or travel experience. 2 months commission. No Andol. Tel: 0171 493 5122. Venture Plus Personnel

DIRECTORS' TEMPORARIES

We require more good temporaries at up to £10 per hour. Age: 25-40.

0171 629 9323

DIRECTORS' SECRETARIES

£20-22,000 OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEAM PLAYERS in a large firm of Management Consultants. Good secretarial and organisational skills, working knowledge of Powerpoint or similar Desktop Publishing package. These positions offer involvement in projects and the opportunity to be a valued member of a team working with the consultants. You need to be flexible, an achiever and committed. -please call Caroline on 0171 499 5981 Adecco Elite 16 Lansdowne Row, Berkeley Sq., London W1X 7LN

Mad March Temping! Up to £10 per hour

Every year during March, the Hobstones temp Team has a mad rush of bookings to cover late winter holidays and early Spring break!

To help us meet this demand and to prepare for a busy Summer of temping, join the team without delay.

If you have 50 wpm typing, good Windows knowledge and ideally Spreadsheets/DTP too, we would love to hear from you NOW!

City Consultants: Victoria and Gillian 0171 550 7000
West End Consultants: Liz, Holly and Alexa 0171 437 6032

ARE YOU A CREATIVE CREATURE?

As media secretarial specialists we can offer you a world of exciting opportunities



- from the Arts, publishing, broadcasting, marketing, PR and music



If you are a good PA or Secretary with a professional attitude, we'll find you a job you'll be glad to leave!

Salary range £10,000 - £25,000+

TEL: 0171 490 6566
FAX: 0171 493 6320

GROSVENOR BUREAU

EXECUTIVE RECEPTIONIST

to £21,000 + Banking Bens

Excellent opportunity for an extremely polished Receptionist to work within this Banking Organisation. The role incorporates scheduling appointments, so keyboard skills a must. The ideal candidate will be aged 25-40 and have had experience as a Receptionist working for a banking/financial organisation.

Please contact Melinda Marks

Jonathan Wren & Co Ltd,
No.1 New Street, London EC2M 4TP
Tel: 0171 623 1266 Fax: 0171 626 5259

HR SECRETARY

£20,000 + Excellent Bens

An interesting and exciting opportunity to work for the HR Director of a major financial organisation. Excellent secretarial skills are required as well as organisational flair to manage this busy office. Good standard of education and shorthand preferred.

Please contact Margaret Sorohan.

Jonathan Wren & Co Ltd,
No.1 New Street, London EC2M 4TP
Tel: 0171 623 1266 Fax: 0171 626 5259

BANKING PLUS!

DESK ASSISTANT £20,000 + BONUS + BENS
A dynamic Equity Sales team require an assistant/secretary to organise travel, liaise with clients and complete research. Fluent French required.

DYNAMIC BOSSES £19,000 + MS + BENS
Manage two busy diaries, co-ordinate extensive travel plans and liaise with senior level clients... these are just a few of the duties involved in this exciting opening.

Please contact Melinda Marks or Margaret Sorohan.

Jonathan Wren & Co Ltd,
No.1 New Street, London EC2M 4TP
Tel: 0171 623 1266 Fax: 0171 626 5259

TRI-LINGUAL SECRETARY

An impressive European Government Agency has a position for a Senior Secretary with at least three European languages. Fluent Portuguese and English essential as is 3 years+ experience with Word 4 Windows and 50wpm for this excellent opportunity starting immediately.

£20,000

REED
EMPLOYMENT
SERVICES

For Executive Secretarial Positions In The West End. Tel: 0171 224 2820

PA/SECRETARY

A genuine PA role working for the Operations Director of this dynamic information company. This is a varied and interesting role ideally suited to an IT literate individual with drive and enthusiasm. Excellent MS Office skills will be rewarded with outstanding training prospects.

£20,000

For Executive Secretarial Positions In The City. Tel: 0171 638 1666

MARKETING

£22,000 + BENEFITS

The Managing Director of the Marketing Department of this large, blue chip PLC has a unique opportunity for a lively, client orientated Assistant to join his team. High levels of energy, exceptional written and verbal communication skills in conjunction with advanced Word for Windows are prerequisites. This role will be varied and will challenge even the most experienced of secretaries. In addition to the complex day to day management of the senior executive's life, projects work and client involvement will form a large part of the job. A level education, 80/10wpm and a language are desirable. All applicants are invited to apply.

0171 814 0800

Angela Mortimer

JOSLIN ROWE

secretarial recruitment consultants

Shorthand Secretaries c£18,000 + Bens City/West End

We have a variety of positions for shorthand secretaries/PAs within financial and insurance companies. The roles vary but require good shorthand speeds (80-110wpm), fast accurate typing (60wpm) and knowledge of a wide range of systems including Word for Windows, Excel and Powerpoint. Previous experience within the City would be desirable along with a solid work history. Good organisational skills, a professional attitude and pro-active approach to your work is essential for these roles.

Joslin Rowe Associates Ltd
Bell Court House, 11 Bloomsfield Street
London EC2M 7AY
Telephone: 0171 588 7287 Facsimile: 0171 582 9417

JOSLIN ROWE

secretarial recruitment consultants

Secretarial Administrator c£14,500 West End

A Covent Garden Management Consultancy is looking for a bright and proactive administrator for a varied role. The position is split between secretarial and administrative duties and will include: new business processing, maintaining a library of product information, assisting in the collation of client reports and copy/typing. As you will be dealing with your own correspondence and liaising with clients you will ideally have at least 1 years' secretarial experience and the confidence and flexibility to work in both a support role and independently. Word for Windows and good typing skills are essential. Powerpoint and experience of EMail would be very useful.

Joslin Rowe Associates Ltd
Bell Court House, 11 Bloomsfield Street
London EC2M 7AY
Telephone: 0171 588 7287 Facsimile: 0171 582 9417

The Susan Mills Portfolio

SEC/PA £20,000 + mthg
Proactive, flexible secretary with strong computer skills. Director + small team. Typ 55 wpm. W/W + car telephone skills 9.00-5.00 with some paid off.

Receptionist £16 + £19K
High profile, active reception role in 2 top calibre, exp. immediately groomed and well spoken receptionists.

Team Player to £18,000
Ideal post for a young secretary (20-28) with initiative, to join a top finance corp. in a very busy client driven environment. Good bonus + opps. Paid off.

TEMP SECRETARIES £9-11p/hr
Immediate start, varied, long and short term assignments in top City and West End Companies. Fast accurate typing & good software knowledge.

Tel: 0171 242 3276 Fax: 0171 831 5352 (Rec Cons)

Human Resources

Personal Assistant to £22,000 aae

Self sufficient Personal Assistant with either experience or a strong interest in Human Resources. Working for two senior Executives (with European wide responsibilities) and enjoying maximum delegation / project work. Company is American owned, dynamic, with varied business interests globally. London headquarters are in Mayfair and accommodation is new and interior designed. Worldwide staff number 55,000. A minimum of 5 years experience and Word for Windows, Powerpoint, Excel. Language skills useful - preferably German or French. Benefits include four weeks holiday rising to five and a day off for your birthday! Start as soon as possible.

Susan Doughty Recruitment
39A Curzon Street London W1Y 7RF
Tel: 0171-491 7911 Fax: 0171-491 7922

COOL, CALM & COLLECTED City c. £16,000 + Bens

Sen. required for small US stockbroker. Step into the fascinating world of finance supporting busy executives, diary mgmt., travel and info, file mgmt., hard working, dedicated & highly organised with 50 wpm, W/W & Excel. Call now on

Tel 0171 377 6777/Fax 377 5079

MIDDLETON JEFFERS RECRUITMENT LIMITED

TEMPS needed

RIGHT NOW!

TALISMAN Secretarial Ltd

We urgently require high quality secretaries. In return we pay top rates and offer exciting long and short term assignments in both Corporate and Media companies. Please call Julie on: 0171 828 2727

career moves

RECRUITMENT MANAGER £20-25,000

Top 4 PR Consultancy

Supporting the Personnel Manager as the No.2 in Personnel and Human Resources, this challenging position requires a dedicated recruitment Manager who can demonstrate at least 3 years experience recruiting for all levels within a media environment. IPO or similar qualifications preferred but not essential.

Also recruiting

PA/CO-ORDINATOR £18,000

European Pharmaceuticals PR Account

TEAM SEC/CO-ORDINATOR £14,000

Pan European PR Account

MS Office (Powerpoint and Excel) & 2 European languages. Ideally French and/or German.

Please call Jane Bally on 0171 292 2900 or fax your CV on 0171 434 0297.

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CREME DE LA CREME

Room at The Top

PA to Dream Boss

£30,000 Package

The dynamic Managing Director of this successful West End based company is looking for a new PA. This is a fantastic opportunity for a PA to work in a dynamic, fast-paced environment. The successful candidate will be responsible for a wide range of duties including: managing the Director's diary, handling correspondence, and organising travel arrangements. The package includes a salary of £30,000 per annum, a car, and a pension scheme.

Angela Mortimer is an equal opportunities employer. All applicants are positively welcomed.

0171 287 7788

Angela Mortimer

GLOBAL SALES
£21,000

Dealing with multinationals worldwide, this Director is looking for a co-ordinator to oversee support and reporting functions for their UK sales team. Duties include organising extensive foreign travel, conferences, training and campaigns. Must be available immediately with good Word, Powerpoint and Excel.

Please telephone 0171 495 2321.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

RECEPTION
£19,000

This international blue chip company have an opening for a career receptionist. Based in prestigious Mayfair offices you will present a poised and professional image to clients and VIP's alike. Keyboard skills essential. Please telephone 0171 495 2321.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

MEDIA PA
£25,000

This holding company has media interests including publishing and TV. They need a senior level secretary to assist a board level director in an operational role. High profile position, VIP liaison with 30% of your time given to project based work. Good PC skills and 100 wpm shorthand. Please telephone 0171 495 2321.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

PARTNERS' PA'S
£24,000 + EXC BENS

Proactive, resourceful "thinking" PAs are needed for three successful companies. A true right hand to your boss with excellent skills, you can become fully involved in his professional life. Windows essential, shorthand useful. Please telephone 0171 628 9529.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

WEST LONDON
£20,000

This international IT specialist, in West London, needs a personal assistant to support the head of operations. The position would ideally suit a traditional style secretary with director level experience and the ability to work on his/her own initiative. Please telephone 0171 628 9529.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

EXEC ASSISTANT
£22,000

Total involvement and career development are offered by this prestigious Mayfair based executive search consultancy. An organised mind, professional poise and first rate administrative skills will prove invaluable. 60wpm typing essential. Please telephone 0171 495 2321.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

CITY TEMPS
do you have experience in...

- CORPORATE FINANCE
- CORPORATE LAW
- PROPERTY LAW
- MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS
- LITIGATION

with good general all round secretarial skills. If so call us on 0171 638 9991 in order to earn £10 - £12 ph.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

WEST END TEMPS
Secretaries and receptionists

- Top hourly rates, loyalty bonus and paid bank holidays.
- Immediate short and long term assignments; matched to your individual experience and skills.

For more information please telephone Jane, Sophie & Jo on 0171 499 8070

Elizabeth Hunt
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EXECUTIVE PA
£25,000 to £30,000

An excellent opportunity to join one of the world's leading energy companies. As an executive assistant you will expand your PA experience in a role which will give you your own responsibilities for research and reports. Microsoft Office experience essential. Please telephone 0171 628 9529.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

PR
£18,000

What did you do last week? This secretary booked an international personality for a TV launch party, kept journalists at bay, supplied statistics to the FT, organised a photocall and arranged client hospitality at Cheltenham. If this is more interesting than your week- Please telephone 0171 628 9529.

Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

Only one temporary recruitment agency in London guarantees its biggest asset.

You.

Lots of work with top notch clients. Great rates of pay. Plenty of variety. What more could you want from your recruitment agency?

How about a company that actually guarantees its temporaries?

The Tate 100% no quibble, Watertight Guarantee is the ultimate accolade. Because it says you're the best.

If you have secretarial, reception or VDU/clerical skills and think you've got what it takes to join Tate, come along for a chat.

As well as appointments in office hours, we'll be here between 6pm and 8pm Monday to Thursday - just come along! On Saturday 22 March, we're making appointments between 10am and 4pm and for City temps we'll be in EC4 on Monday 24 March.

Just contact Cherie Macgregor-Skinner or Rachel Huggins on 0171 408 0425.

Tate, 70 - 71 New Bond Street, London W1Y 9DE.

Tate
WATERTIGHT GUARANTEE

CORPORATE SECRETARIES
£21,000 + BANKING BENS

Not everyone enjoys working within the most busy and dynamic area of Investment Banking. There is always lots of overtime (ALL PAID), lots of typing, presentation work and client liaison at the highest level. If you do, you'll thrive under pressure, enjoy being part of a young and sociable team and be rewarded with a superb financial package. Essential skills: 65 wpm typing, Word, Powerpoint and Excel + previous banking exp useful.

CORPORATE TEMPS
Unlimited opportunities for highly skilled and motivated temps. Excellent MS Office and typing speeds essential. Call now for superb opportunities.

0171 551 2222

Personnel Secretary
City £17,000

Large City law firm are looking for a bright enthusiastic second jobber who wishes to develop their career within a personnel environment. You should have 'O' level education along with 60 wpm typing and a professional attitude. In return they offer an excellent benefit package with a unique opportunity to get into Personnel. Call Kim Harris on 0171 550 7000

LEGAL RECRUITMENT

Aldrich & Company

- BRIGHT SPARK**
£18-20k + Glittering Pkg
Marketing Assistant / Secretary needed for a young team in a high profile Food Management Company. This is a great chance to build a career, deal directly with clients and use your initiative. Call Emily Aldrich
- PERSONNEL ADMIN**
£18k + Great Bens
Act as complete right hand within HR of a city bank. Liaise with line managers and agencies, book temps on weekly basis, provide sec support, offer letters, induction packs etc. Busy and fun role. Call Sarah Turnbull
- STEP INTO THE CITY**
£18k plus o/t++
This team of three young directors need some help. Would suit 2nd jobber with a confident & flexible approach. Masses of involvement and a really sociable department. Fabulous city offices. Call Alex Gaze

Tel: 0171 588 8999 CITY RECRUITMENT Fax: 0171 588 8998

PA - £18,000 NEG
LEISURE WC2

Excellent alternative for leisure info co. own areas of adult/research projects. WWW/Powerpoint/Excel/Access exp in Marketing helpful. Mrs Pinner 0171 239 6999, Broadway Barnes

DESIGN SEC
£17,000

Secretary needed for large fashion house working in City office. The work will include high level of client liaison, diary management and meeting organisation as well as general sec duties. Will suit a person with previous work of at least 6 months sec exp. Please fax CV's 0171 734 4885 South Somerset Road Tel: 0171 734 5885

MAINE-TUCKER
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

A genuine career path and a good salary!...

PR Assistant
£15,000 + bens

There are many ways to build a successful career and this is one of them. We are looking for a PR Assistant to join our team. The role involves a wide range of duties including media liaison, event organisation and client support. We offer a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

A career in Human Resources!
up to £15,000

This is a fantastic job for a graduate who wants a great start in HR. Work for a small, young company in the West End and be immediately involved in project work. Research, research and client liaison are key responsibilities. The role offers a great opportunity to develop your HR skills and gain valuable experience.

Bold Beginnings
£16K + bens

If exciting prospects and interesting contact with the Government and Press are your thing, then this is the job for you. You will be responsible for a wide range of duties including media liaison, event organisation and client support. We offer a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

MAINE-TUCKER
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

GREEN PARK
PA TO CHAIRMAN - £18k + bonus + bens

There are many ways to build a successful career and this is one of them. We are looking for a PA to the Chairman of a large company. The role involves a wide range of duties including media liaison, event organisation and client support. We offer a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

MAINE-TUCKER
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

SLICK RECEPTION
up to £20,000 + bens

There are many ways to build a successful career and this is one of them. We are looking for a slick receptionist to join our team. The role involves a wide range of duties including media liaison, event organisation and client support. We offer a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

MAINE-TUCKER
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

ADMIN/SECRETARY
- up to £18,500 + free meals, sports facilities

There are many ways to build a successful career and this is one of them. We are looking for an admin/secretary to join our team. The role involves a wide range of duties including media liaison, event organisation and client support. We offer a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

Chief Executive - to £30,000

Arranging shooting parties and liaising with the stud manager will be part of your role when you support a well-known International Investment Bank from his City base.

The very nature of his business means he is constantly on the move travelling between London, New York, the Far East and elsewhere. Your role is to organise all aspects of his life, co-ordinate his hectic schedule, and liaise with his contacts worldwide. Skills 100/70.

0171 629 9323

DIRECTORS' SECRETARIES

Office Manager/PA
Fashion West End

Our client, an internationally famous upmarket fashion brand, is currently seeking a dynamic PA to work closely with the MD and Operations Director. You will be super organised, well presented, good humoured, and willing to become totally involved with the team. You will also be responsible for managing office issues and customer liaison. Shorthand at 70/80 wpm is desirable as is PC literacy specifically Excel.

For further information contact Verne Simmons.

SUCCESS APPOINTMENTS - 7 ADE STREET - LONDON W1R 5RJ
TEL 0171 267 7722 FAX 0171 734 1692

SENIOR HR ASSISTANT
£25,000 + Banking Benefits

The HR Director of this international investment bank needs a forward thinking assistant. Working with a team of 10, you will advise your previous HR experience or HRD qualifications to manage your own research projects. Your experience in the banking sector, ability to liaise at senior level and excellent secretarial skills will be fully utilised when providing comprehensive PA support. A flexible approach to working in a team environment will require strong administrative skills, discretion and consistent use of MS Office. For details of this and other vacancies at this level please call now.

Angela Mortimer is an equal opportunities employer. All applicants are positively welcomed.

0171 814 0800

Angela Mortimer

EXECUTIVE PA'S
£21,000 Package

A major blue-chip Management Consultancy is looking for a senior PA to support a Managing Director. Excellent opportunities and advancement skills will be required for managing client conferences and co-ordinating a hectic business schedule and complex travel itineraries. Outstanding secretarial skills will also be essential for coping in this fast-moving environment which rewards dedication and commitment with opportunities for personal and professional development. As well as enjoying considerable client contact, management liaison and being able to learn, you should have 50wpm and preferably shorthand.

Angela Mortimer is an equal opportunities employer. All applicants are positively welcomed.

0171 814 0800

Angela Mortimer

TEMPS TO £12.00 PER HOUR

Top rates. Great jobs. User friendly consultants. Some of the best companies to work for, City & West End locations. How? Simple really, we want the best for you, our respected clients and ourselves. Good skills (possibly another language), adaptability and flexibility are the keys to successful temping. Whether you seek a long term contract, a temp to perm job or a few weeks here or there, we can help. So call us today.

Call Nicole Simmons on 0171 377 5500 or fax your CV to 0171 377 5599

CROSS SELECTION

Corporate Finance
19-22k + Bank Bens

We are inundated with opportunities for young secretaries with some City experience. Lots of variety offered in return for your fast accurate typing skills including WPM, Excel and Powerpoint. Arrange travel, meetings and diaries, liaise with high profile clients. Formal secretarial qualifications plus a good education essential and you will need to be professional and flexible.

To find out more call Cross Selection: 0171 377 5500 or fax your CV to 0171 377 5599.

CROSS SELECTION

RECRUITMENT MANAGER
W1 ADVERTISING AGENCY
£27,000 + BENEFITS

Our clients are seeking an experienced Recruitment Manager to join small HR function of top International Advertising Agency. Responsibilities will include heavy recruitment of secretarial, IT, administrative and support staff, induction, compiling job descriptions, liaising with temporary and permanent agencies, etc. It is envisaged that the ideal candidate will be 28+, hopefully 100% qualified, extremely pro-active and highly motivated. This really is a first class career move! Please call Sandy or fax CV to

Rainbow Recruitment
12 South Molton Street, London W1Y 1DF
Tel: 0171 491 7252 Fax: 0171 491 2887

SH/SEC TO SALES DIRECTOR
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FESTIVALS

From Hollywood actress Kathleen Turner, treading the boards in Chichester this year...



FESTIVALS

... and Sir Simon Rattle, who conducts a concert in an exciting Bath fortnight...

THE TIMES ARTS



FESTIVALS

... to the City of London's celebration of Dracula's 100 years in the cinema...



FESTIVALS

... and fabulous spectacle at the Notting Hill Carnival: we select this summer's finest nights out

Premieres and pop stars, carnivals and choruses: Gillian Maxey previews the best of the British festivals

Top festival delights of summer '97

APRIL

Chichester Theatre: A starry line-up for the Festival Theatre's summer season: Ian McShane, Stephanie Beacham, Google Withers, Maureen Lipman and the Hollywood actress Kathleen Turner. Plays include *The Admirable Crichton*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Illthe Spirit*, *Our Betters*, and *Divorce Me Darling!*. Sandy Wilson's high-kicking sequel to *The Boyfriend*.
April 15-Sept 27 (01243 781312)

MAY

Bath: Now in its 48th year. Classical, contemporary and jazz music, together with modern art, explore the theme "Resurrection". The Contemporary Music Weekend, with trail-blazing composer Iannis Xenakis, is an exciting addition, and the Clerical Medical Jazz Weekend makes a welcome return. Highlights include the Opening Night celebrations, Sir Simon Rattle, James Galway, Emma Kirkby, Steven Isserlis and an extensive Fringe Festival.
May 16-June 1 (01225 463362)

Beverly and East Riding: Early music binge celebrates its tenth anniversary and new name with a musical journey through medieval North Africa, Renaissance Europe and 18th-century London. The Gabrieli Consort and Fretwork lead the way.
May 1-11 (01482 884354)

BOC Covent Garden, London: Two weeks of opera and music theatre in the cultural heart of London embraces the contrasting themes of "Venetian Splendour" and "American Pizzazz". Highlights include British Youth Opera's new production of *The Gondoliers*, the San Francisco music revue, *Beach Blanket Babylon*, and Stephen Sondheim's cult musical, *Anyone Can Whistle*.
May 26-June 7 (0171 312 1922)

Brighton: Colourful international festival encompassing the anniversaries of Schubert and Brahms. Premieres include *Danton's Tod*, Gottfried von Einem's French Revolution opera, Joshua Sobol's *The Village*, and *Waioira* by Maori playwright Hone Kouka. Contem-



Schubert fêted in Sheffield, Brighton and Malvern

porary and classical music, dance, literature and debate, films and exhibitions and concurrently with a programme of street theatre.
May 3-25 (01273 676926)

Bury St Edmunds: Seventeen days on fete in the historic market town. Highlights include a Michael Tippett UK premiere, the world premiere of *The Roswell Incident* by Music Theatre Wales, drama from Methil and Madness and jazz from Carla Bley. Also, poetry, films, dance, street theatre, comedy and a Viennese fireworks finale.
May 9-25 (01284 759505)

Chelmsford Cathedral: Chamber, choral and keyboard music, sandwiched between orchestral concerts by the Britten Sinfonia and Academy of St Martin in the Fields. Other highlights include a production of *War Child* by National Youth Music Theatre, jazz from John Dankworth and Cleo Laine, and a fringe programme of talks, film, poetry and drama.
May 7-17 (01274 358990)

Glasgow Mayfest: Citywide celebration of the arts, including music, dance, theatre, comedy, visual art, film, magic and storytelling. Opera: Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's controversial *Resurrection*. Dance: UK premieres from Compania Antonio Gades and Les Ballets Africains. Theatre: Hector MacMillan's new play, *A Greater Tomorrow*, about Scots who fought in the Spanish Civil War.
May 1-24 (0141 552 8444)

Glyndebourne: Six operas, 74 performances. New productions of Puccini's *Nanon Lescaut* (directed by Graham Vick, conducted by



Busking below the battlements: the casual fun of the vast Edinburgh Fringe — the world's biggest cultural jamboree — has spawned imitations around the country

John Eliot Gardiner in his Glyndebourne debut and Rossini's comic opera, *Le Comte Ory* (directed by Jérôme Savary). Revivals of Britten's *Owen Wingrave*, Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, Janáček's *The Makropulos Case* and Handel's *Theodora*. Tickets from £10 to £114.
May 18-August 24 (01273 813813)

Leeds: Music, mostly jazz, inspired by the roots and rhythms of New Orleans, Africa, South America, Russia, Germany, the West Indies and the mystery of the Far East.
May 7-11 (0113 243 2491)

Malvern: Elgar in the Malvern Hills, plus Schubert and Brahms. Concerts by resident musician Tasmin Little, the Chillingham Quartet with Raphael Wallfisch, and the New Queen's Hall Orchestra.
May 30-June 7 (01684 572725)

Newbury: A fortnight of festive entertainment. Percussionist Evelyn Glennie, cellist Julian Lloyd Webber, mezzo-soprano Sarah Walker, guitarist Julian Bream, jazz from Humphrey Lyttelton.
May 10-24 (01635 33421)

Perth: Festival amid breathtaking scenery, including French chamber music with pianist Pascal Rogé, Quatuor Parissi and London Winds. Artists include the Moscow State Symphony Orchestra and Helen Shapiro, while the film festival looks at "Scotland on the Silver Screen".
May 22-June 7 (01738 472706)

Sheffield: The Lindsays and Friends explore Schubert and Brahms at this year's Music in the Round May Festival.
May 10-24 (0114 276 9922)

JUNE

Aldeburgh: Founded by Britten, the Suffolk festival celebrates its half century with two premieres by Mark-Anthony Turnage: the music theatre piece, *The Country of the Blind*, based on a story by H.G. Wells, and *Twice Through the Heart*, a 30-minute dramatic scene with mezzo-soprano Sally Burgess. All three of Britten's Church Parables are performed on the same day, and Tabea Zimmermann gives the world premiere of Alexander Goehr's *Viola Concerto* and Britten's 1932 Double Concerto for Violin and Viola.
June 13-27 (01728 453543)

City of London: St Mary-le-Bow's bells will ring out at the start of three weeks of opera, concerts, recitals, jazz, literary events, films and walks in the Square Mile. Highlights include a unique concert dramatisation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, one hundred years of *Dracula* on film, choral concerts commemorating the tercentenary of St Paul's Cathedral, and the world premiere of Bernstein's *The White House Cantata*.
June 19-July 10 (0171 377 0540)

Garsington: Operas on the terrace of the Jacobean manor, including the first British performance of Richard Strauss's *Die Aegyptische Helena* (directed by David Fielding). Haydn's *Le pescatrici* (directed by Robert David MacDonald) and Mozart's *Cost fan tutte* (directed by Ian Judge).
June 9-July 6 (01865 361636)

Glastonbury: The biggest and best of the summer rock festivals returns to the Somerset countryside after a two-year absence. This year's "cultural experience" promises 1,000 performances on 17 stages by more than 500 bands. Other entertainments include theatre, cabaret, comedy, circus performances, a children's adventure play area and educational workshops. Book early to avoid disappointment.
June 27-29 (information 0839 665899, tickets 01179 767868)

Ludlow: Much Ado About Nothing (directed by Glen Walford) is this year's al fresco Shakespeare in the Castle. Plus An Evening with Joanna Trollope, David Jacobs Goes Name Dropping, a repeat of last year's Legends of the Sixties concert and A Tribute to Freddie Mercury and Queen.
June 21-July 6 (01584 872150)

Luthansa Baroque Music, London: A banquet of Baroque music in the delightful setting of Christopher Wren's church of St James in Piccadilly. Joshua Rifkin, La Romanesca, Concerto Italiano, Musica Antiqua Köln and Emma Kirkby among the early music luminaries taking part.
June 6-28 (0171 238 6 888)

St Magnus: The Orkneys' annual arts bash. Music from the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Kathryn Stott, Per Voldstad, the Vagabond String Quartet of Aberdeen, music ensemble Psappha, and "Orkneyings" — drama, dance and music in the community. Poetry by Kenneth White.
June 30-25 (01856 872669)

Spitalfields, London: Music — classical, contemporary and early



Montserrat Caballé sings in Llangollen in July

— in Hawksmoor's Christ Church, Premieres from Judith Weir and David Bedford; Mendelssohn's Opus 44 quartets; mixed programmes from Fretwork, Westminster Cathedral Choir, Joyful Company of Singers and the Fine Arts Ensemble. Education and community events.
June 4-25 (0171 377 0287)

Stour: Baroque and Renaissance music with Lynne Dawson, the Orlando Consort, Florilegium, et al, in the Pilgrim Church, Broughton Alup, Kent. Opera Restor'd performs Lampe's comic opera, *The Dragon of Wantley*.
June 20-29 (01233 812740)

Thaxted: Four weekends of music in the medieval village rejoice in the theme Courts, Coronations and Celebrations, with performances by the Britten Sinfonia, Gabrieli Consort and Players, the London Ragtime Orchestra and Kenny Ball and his Band.
June 20-July 13 (01371 831421)

JULY

BBC Henry Wood Promenade Concerts: From the First Night to the Last, the 103rd season of the Proms will feature more than 70 concert performances and semi-stagings in the magnificent setting of the Albert Hall. Schubert, Mendelssohn, Brahms and Bartók are among the composers. The *Proms Guide* will be available from late April.
July 18-September 13 (0171 765 5575)

Buxton: Opera in the Peak District spa town, complemented by orchestral concerts, chamber music, cabaret, jazz, masterclasses, the Young Artists series and festival masses. Resident baritone Donald Maxwell features in a triple bill of comic opera. Performances of Haydn's *Life on the Moon* and John Alver's music theatre piece, *My Dear Mozart*.
July 11-27 (01298 70395)

Cambridge: Performing arts are the focus of this year's CamFest (June 10-July 19), while the Grassroots Festival of New Writing (June 23-July 19) and the Shakespeare Festival (June 30-end August) provide something for everyone. Early music throughout July and August. Pop in the Park (July 11) and the best in folk, blues, country and roots at the Folk Festival (July 25-27).
June-August (01223 463363)

Cheltenham Music: Busy international festival incorporating classical, modern, symphony, chamber and solo recitals. An Austro-Germanic theme embraces the various anniversaries of Brahms, Schubert and Mendelssohn. Plus a Schwetitsk premiere and Berlin cabaret songs. Music by Ockeghem and Poulenc, early music, jazz, film and music theatre.
July 5-20 (01242 27377)

Chester: Summer music in the city's beautiful Grosvenor Park, with artist-in-residence, pianist Joanna MacGregor. Opera, with soloists Lesley Garrett and Bonaventura Bontone, the music of Andrew Lloyd Webber, soprano Felicity Lott, the Orlando Consort, folk singer June Tabor and the Chester Mystery Plays.
July 11-26 (01244 320722)

Chichester Festivities: A fireworks spectacular launches 17 days of entertainment, played out in the magnificent Norman cathedral and its environs. Symphony concerts, chamber music and jazz vie with exhibitions, opera, alternative comedy and celebrity lectures (including *Times* columnist Libby Purves).
July 4-20 (01243 785718)

Fishguard: The composer Alun Hoddinott presides over a popular mix of choral, orchestral and recital music, this year celebrating the musical genius of Schubert and Steinway. Pianist Océile Ousset and string ensemble Quatuor Parissi lead a friendly invasion from France to the Pembrokeshire coastal town and nearby St David's Cathedral.
July 25-August 2 (01348 873612)

Greenwich and Docklands: Entering its second year of international programming, the festival begins a special relationship with Barcelona with a recreation of the city's celebrated *Dies de Dansa* festival in the grounds of the Royal Naval College, and performances by pianist Alicia de Larrocha and jazz maestro Tete Montoliu. Irvine Welsh's cutting-edge theatre piece, *Headstate*, and music from the Michael Nyman Band, Jools Holland, I Pagliolini and the Academy of Ancient Music add spice to the menu.
July 11-20 (0181 305 1818)

Harrogate: World-class entertainment in the splendid spa town. International symphony orchestras, soprano Felicity Lott, Django Bates and Carol Kidd at the jazz fest, street theatre and Laifs at the Baths.
July 25-August 9 (01423 562303)

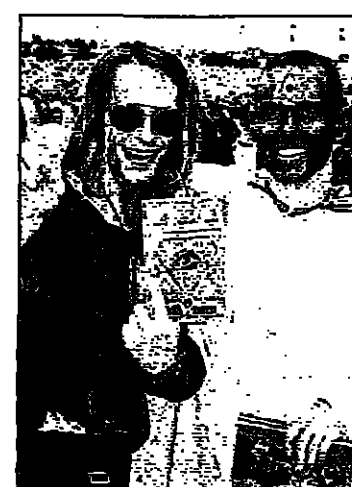
Henley: Music and the arts on the banks of the Thames. Lesley Garrett and the BBC Concert Orchestra return to the floating stage. Plus jazz and humour from the Temperance Seven, the band of the Royal Air Force, laser displays, fireworks, dance bands, cabaret, living sculpture, and Last Night flagwaving with mezzo-soprano Sarah Walker.
July 9-12 (01491 411333)

King's Lynn: Cultures of the world unite with the help of Emma Kirkby, the Kirov Chamber Choir, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, flamenco by candlelight and a production of *The Merchant of Venice*.
July 19-August 2 (01553 773578)

Lichfield: Lesley Garrett, Melvyn Tan, the BBC Philharmonic and

massed American choirs mark the anniversaries of Schubert, Brahms and Mendelssohn — and the 85th anniversary of the sinking of the *Titanic* (whose captain was a native of Staffordshire).
July 4-13 (01543 257298)

Llangollen Eisteddfod: Six magical days of music, song and dance in North Wales. International choirs in daily competitions and evening concerts, and folk dancers in colourful national costume. Montserrat Caballé, Joanna



Glastonbury: the monster is back after a two-year absence

MacGregor, King's College Choir and the London Adventist Choral drop by.
July 8-13 (01978 860236)

Phoenix: Britain's only four-day pop festival ranks alongside Glastonbury for attracting the happening acts of the year. Seven stages of music vie with comedy, funfairs and a circus.
July 17-20 (0181 963 0940)

Warwick and Leamington: Early music, jazz, orchestral concerts, choral music and exhibitions amid the glorious architecture of medieval and Georgian Warwick and Regency Leamington. A *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Treasure Island* and Viennese evenings with fireworks at the Castle.
July 2-13 (01926 496277)

Womad: Family-orientated festival of world music, workshops, arts and crafts beside the Thames in Reading. Headline acts: Burning Spear, Mory Kanté, Faithless, Ravi Shankar and Carlinhos Brown.
July 25-27 (0118 939 0930)

York Early Music: Medieval churches, historic houses and ancient guildhalls house Britain's biggest festival of early music. The human voice is celebrated with performances of Handel's *Belshazzar* by the King's Consort and Monteverdi's *The Return of Ulysses* by Opera North. Also taking part, the Choir of King's College Cambridge, the BBC Singers, and Italian ensemble La Reverdi in its British debut.
July 4-13 (01904 658338)

AUGUST

Arundel: Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well* in the castle grounds and concerts in the Barons' Hall. Fireworks, jazz, family shows, folk, art gallery trail and Felicity Lott.
August 22-31 (01903 683690)

Edinburgh International: Fiftieth anniversary celebrated with a look back to the premieres and highlights of the past. Visiting artists to Scotland's capital will include the Royal Opera, San Francisco Ballet, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Bryn Terfel, Mikhail Pletnev and Steven Isserlis. Innovative theatre and outrageous stand-up in the enormous Fringe festival (Aug 10-30, 0131 226 5257), preceded by the syncretic rhythms of the Jazz and Blues fest (Aug 2-10, 0131 557 1642). International Festival August 10-30 (0131 226 4001)

Edinburgh Film: International festival featuring David Lynch's *The Highway*, a retrospective of director Edgar G. Ulmer and a new focus on documentaries. *The Graduate* is the subject of this year's popular *Scene by Scene*.
August 10-24 (0131 228 4051)

Hereford, Three Choirs: Europe's oldest choral festival celebrates the anniversaries of Schubert, Mendelssohn and Brahms, with birthday tributes to the composers John Gardner, John Joubert and Paul Patterson. Premieres include a new choral and orchestral work by Judith Bingham and *Paradise Lost*, a new choral work based on Milton's epic poem, complemented by a lively Fringe.
August 17-22 (01432 274455)

Notting Hill: Annual celebration of black culture explodes onto the streets of London amid a carnival atmosphere of music, dance and spectacular costumes. Two million spectators expected.
August 24-25 (0181 964 0544)

Reading: Long-established, unadulterated rock festival with a reputation for attracting the top names from America.
August 22-24 (0181 963 0940)

V97: Last year's newcomer to the rock scene, V96, enters its second year under the patronage of Virgin Cola Company. Headline acts at Hylands Park in Chelmsford and at Newsam Park in Leeds are expected to include the Prodigy, Blur, Kula Shaker, Beck and the Foo Fighters.
August 16 and 17 (0171 734 8932)

SEPTEMBER

North Wales, St Asaph: Music with the emphasis on youth, hence appearances by the National Youth Choir and Chamber Orchestra of Wales and a host of young artists. New works by Pwyll ap Iwan, Lyn Davies, and resident composer Alun Hoddinott, presented in the magnificent cathedral.
September 20-27 (01745 584508)

Windsor: Peter Donohoe and Travelling Opera in the Castle, James Bowman and the Consort of Viols at Eton College.
September 21-October 5 (01753 623400)

OCTOBER

Canterbury: The Royal Shakespeare Company, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Phoenix Dance Company and George Gershwin's centenary. Classical concerts in the cathedral nave and intimate recitals in the crypt. Jazz and opera in the Marlowe Theatre, world music, folk and blues in the Festival Club.
October 11-25 (01227 452853)

Cheltenham Literature: Readers and writers come together in a carnival atmosphere for a varied programme of talks, lectures, debates, poetry readings, exhibitions and cutting-edge drama.
October 10-19 (01242 227799)

Dance Umbrella, London: Contemporary dancers from Britain and abroad gather in the South Bank Centre, the Place and Riverside Studios. Workshops, dance films and meet-the-artist sessions.
October 21-mid November (0181 741 5881)

Norfolk and Norwich: East Anglia's burgeoning festival of the performing arts with more than 120 events in and around Norwich celebrating the theme *My Country*. Orchestral concerts, jazz, dance, theatre, comedy — and the stage premiere of William Alwyn's opera, *Miss Julie*.
October 8-19 (01603 764764)

● A guide to European festivals will appear on April 2

■ VISUAL ART

Vermeer and I: David Hockney talks about the influences behind his new flower paintings

■ MUSIC 1

Zubin Mehta conducts an uneasy concert to mark the golden jubilee of Indian independence

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ MUSIC 2

... while Mark Wigglesworth steers his Welsh orchestra through an exhilarating Stravinsky night

■ TOMORROW

How does *Star Wars* rate, second time round? Read Geoff Brown on this week's film releases

How does his garden grow?

David Hockney tells Richard Cork why his forthcoming London show will be full of exuberant flower paintings

By choosing flowers as the main subject of his new London exhibition, David Hockney is implicitly aware that he offers us a challenge. "I know that there's a prejudice against flower paintings," he says, "but I'm going to challenge it. I know that there's a prejudice against flower paintings, but I'm going to challenge it. I know that there's a prejudice against flower paintings, but I'm going to challenge it."

seemed when you came out of the show. So the often startling brightness of Hockney's flower pictures can be seen, in part at least, as his exhilarated and competitive response to Vermeer's radiance. They are also, perhaps more significantly, the outcome of his desire to scrutinise the thing itself. In the past, he has often worked from photographs or his own imagination. But this time he worked only from life. "I've always had flowers in the house," he says. "And since Los Angeles is semi-tropical, even the

ings in a collector's house was like walking into a flower. In a way, everything is an abstraction if it's a picture."

Over the past few years, Hockney has pushed his own painting in an abstract direction. But these limpid flower pictures mark a change, and he clearly revelled in the particular character of the species he chose. The grand sunflowers canvas was inspired by a gift from his friend Jonathan Silver, whose Salts Mill gallery in Bradford has a permanent display of Hockney's work. "Jonathan sent me all these sunflowers for my birthday," he remembers with a grin.

Taking on such a subject meant, inevitably, risking comparison with Van Gogh. But Hockney did not feel daunted. On the contrary: he relished the challenge posed by the blazing sunflowers. "Yellow is not a common colour in painting," he says, "but Van Gogh said it was the colour of hope. People are timid about colour, they don't like it."

Hockney manifestly does. He basks in the brazen, festive impact of the flowers in these unfettered canvases. But he is conscious, too, of their ability to symbolise transience. Even the most innocuous of 17th-century Dutch flower paintings can easily turn out to be a memento mori. And Hockney, when pressed, admits that "I'm interested in fragility as a subject". He found himself painting the flowers fast, in order to ensure that they did not wither and perish before he had finished. "Every single day they altered, and I even saw a cactus growing when I included it in a still life with lemons." Change fascinates him as much as space, and the speed with which Hockney worked undoubtedly contributes to the pictures' liveliness. "Flowers shoot upwards in great celebratory bursts," he says eagerly, waving his hands in the air as if to mimic the eruptive impact of a fireworks display.

He has, of course, painted flowers before: one of his most-reproduced works, *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy*, includes a particularly appealing vase of white lilies on a low table. But never before has Hockney devoted such single-minded energy to the subject, nor produced so many flower paintings in a sustained bout of exploration.

He finds working alone in the studio is a tonic after spending a major part of his time on demanding, and often exhausting, opera designs. "I've finished with the

Although Vermeer's colour is more than 300 years old, it'll last longer than MGM's

most exotic ones are easy to get hold of. But for these paintings, I arranged them carefully in the studio. By playing with the lighting, I can make the shadows go anywhere."

Viewed from a distance, the results look highly illusionistic. Nothing could appear more palpable than the 30 sunflowers filling one of the largest canvases with their fierce chromatic brilliance. Seen close to, though, the paint becomes surprisingly thin and anti-descriptive, almost to the point of abstraction. Hockney is well aware of the paradox, and it fascinates him. "Friends said: 'When you paint so close to the picture, how do you know what it'll look like from way back?'" The answer is that Hockney is increasingly obsessed with the spatial experience of moving around his big studio. "The real subject of these flower paintings is space," he insists. "I react to something in space, to the way my eyes dance around the flowers."

Since we are sitting next to a small Mondrian painting of 1927, utterly rigorous in its austere pictorial structure, I ask Hockney how much he responds to the opposing abstract art. "I found the Ad Reinhardt exhibition in New York incredibly beautiful," he says, "and finding a roomful of Ellsworth Kelly's paint-



David Hockney in front of 30 Sunflowers: "I react to the way my eyes dance around the flowers"

theatre now," he says. "It's an ephemeral art, making me give months and months to something that only lasts a few hours. In the theatre, collaboration means compromise, and I'd rather get back to painting on my own. I take out my hearing aids and work in complete silence."

He only stopped painting flowers

last year because his opera commitments obliged him to visit Australia for two major productions. "But when I return to California now, I shall just go back to flowers again. For me, it's a terrific subject."

Does the Juda exhibition mean that he is becoming more involved with London, or will he spend the rest of his life in the Californian sun?

"I'm a bit claustrophobic," he confesses, "and that's why I live in LA. I like big, white, open spaces. I love the vastness of the American West. England is small, and I've been abroad too long to come back now."

David Hockney's exhibition, *Flowers, Faces and Spaces*, opens at Annely Juda Fine Art, 23 Dering Street, London W1 (0171-639 7578) on May 1

Saving our soul

LEWIS TAYLOR'S excellent debut album last year was a cultural conundrum: white men simply are not supposed to be this soulful. Lewis Taylor manages to be cool and contemporary but also deeply reverential to its rock and soul heritage. It is the sound of what might have happened if Marvin Gaye and Jimi Hendrix had made an album together with Brian Wilson as producer.

With the help of some celebrity endorsements from David Bowie and others, momentum is still building for the album more than six months after its release. And thanks to this intelligent book-

POP

Lewis Taylor
Ronnie Scott's, W1

ing, Taylor has made Ronnie Scott's the place to bring an enquiring musical mind during March with a run of Sunday night shows.

Opening with *Whoever*, he and his band were at once well drilled and in repose, dangling the track's persuasive groove in front of a crowded room like a hypnotist's pendulum. "Be prepared," he sang, "things can get a little bit tasty," accurately foretelling the invigorating hour that followed.

Taylor has learnt Gaye's soul vocabulary from A to Z, elongating the vowel in the word "baby" like a true lost son of Motown, but he can peel off a lick like the brogue fan he also is, and sings of vexed modern relationships with a lyrical touch that would bring a smile from Curtis Mayfield.

So he may have the keys to the Motor City — achievement enough for a boy from Barnet in north London — but Taylor has also cracked the combination of electric guitar, full-flavoured funk and rich harmonies that kept their shape on stage. *Tract and Damn* went beyond his finger-snapping norms, making you want to sing along, and the forthcoming single *Bittersweet* was aptly named.

Most endearingly, Taylor is not at home to pretentious solemnity, smiling with his bandmates and thanking us sincerely. The theory that Caucasian soulfulness begins and ends with Janniquel may need some adjustment.

PAUL SEXTON

CONCERTS: Shankars with sitars and Mahler makes three; celebrating Stravinsky; new baritone on the block

Bombay to Vienna

LSO/Mehta
Barbican

Indian independence may be sufficiently ancient history for its 50th anniversary to be celebrated, as it was by the London Symphony Orchestra on Monday night, without political embarrassment. Whether traces of cultural hegemony can be so easily masked is another matter.

The evening was a festive one, presenting, in the first half, works by Indian composers, and in the second half Mahler's First Symphony, all conducted by the Bombay-born Zubin Mehta. Ravi Shankar, the former guru now nearly 77, appeared with his 15-year-old daughter Anoushka in his own Concerto No 1 for Sitar and Orchestra of 1971, and it was here that the cultural mix seemed most problematic. When Shankar gives himself the space to ruminate, unimpeded by orchestral intermissions, he is at his most evocative, but when he has the strings racing around like headless chickens, the result is anonymous.

The third movement (*Raga Adana*) begins atmospherically with horns and upper strings, before lower strings and wind sustain quiet octaves under a beautiful sitar solo. This minimal interaction works well, but all too soon we are back to the characteristic racing figures. With the final movement come lively antiphonal exchanges and passages of invigorating complexity for the two sitars and drums.

The precise role of Miss Shankar — her part rarely seemed independent — was unclear, but the sight of revered icon and glamorous daughter seated together on the floor brought them a standing ovation.

Nareesh Sohal's *Sayagraha*, commissioned by the LSO for the occasion, positively invited disaster by dramatising the struggle for independence by way of the Indian tune *Ram Dhan* and the British supremacist anthem *Rule, Britannia*. The latter is offensively brassy and is finally subdued by the meditative *Ram Dhan*. But aside from a few exotic effects involving harp and celeste, we were back here to the less-than-imaginative block scoring of Sohal's compatriot.

A moment of suspended animation in the first movement of Mahler's Symphony No 1 made the coupling seem less arbitrary. In any case this is a repertoire on which Mehta has an individual take. Characteristic were his exhilarating dash to the finish of the first movement, and the ubiquitous startling gestures (in all departments, not least percussion). But the faraway, dreamy lullaby of the third movement was also nicely conceived, and if the dance music is indeed a Jewish wedding, then the E flat clarinet was a spectral guest.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Stravinsky for all seasons

BBCNOW/
Wigglesworth
Festival Hall

SUNDAY'S BBC National Orchestra of Wales concert was presented under the banner of two festivals, *Stravinsky: Rites of Spring and Sounding the Century*, so it was fitting that the programme felt so festive. It began with *Fireworks* and ended with *Petrushka*, two popular pieces which framed a pair of Stravinsky's less frequently played scores.

The programming was thoughtful. All the music came from the first two decades of Stravinsky's long, creative life, yet it showed how even early on the composer never ceased to reinvent himself. Nowhere was this better shown than in *Apollon*, perhaps the most humane of his Neo-Classical works. It is scored for strings alone, and written in a wistful musical language that suggests Elgar with a few "wrong notes" thrown in. Mark

Wigglesworth, music director of the BBCNOW, conducted a deeply felt performance that was alert to the work's ingenious structure. He summoned up its calm serenity, but softened the edges of the opening almost too much. It was exciting to hear Stravinsky's seldom performed Op 2, *The Faun and the Shepherdess*, and there will be another chance to catch it when the concert is broadcast by Radio 3 tomorrow. With texts taken from Pushkin, it is a suite of three songs for mezzo-soprano and orchestra modelled on 19th-century styles. Tchaikovsky is evoked, but the music has a sound all of its own, especially

when matching the sly eroticism of Pushkin's verses. Sarah Walker was the soloist, completely inside the idiom. *Fireworks*, a compact, exhilarating score dating from just two years after these songs, was the evening's only disappointment: all the colours were there, but the playing could have been tauter. But there was no lack of brilliance or tightness in Wigglesworth's account of *Petrushka*. His conducting had both fluidity and precision; solos took on expressive freedom and the orchestra revelled in the big tunes. Street-cries and folksongs jostled each other in this picture of wintry St Petersburg, but this was no neo-folksy interpretation: in its bracing, spiky way it showed that *The Rite of Spring* was just around the corner.

JOHN ALLISON

Too full facial

Genz/McGreewy
Wigmore Hall

through. In short, one longed for more voice, less face.

Throughout, Roger Vignoles's piano playing was thrillingly eloquent. In order to match it, Genz will have to calm down a little, breathe more deeply, take a step away from his teachers and simply allow his voice to sing more.

Geraldine McGreewy, winner of the 1996 Kathleen Ferrier Award, also made a

somewhat tentative debut at the Wigmore Hall, but for almost diametrically opposite reasons. In a highly imaginative programme, which included music by Ravel, Warlock, Hugh Wood, Schumann and Strauss, McGreewy revealed a beautifully groomed, sweetly melodic soprano, but a somewhat bland performance.

McGreewy had a natural talent for the French repertoire, but for the disturbed doppelgänger of Hugh Wood's Robert Graves setting, *The Forgetting*, the voice has yet to discover its shadow side.

McGreewy, unlike Genz, needs to work harder at working her audience, and at focusing her responses more intensely on text and subtext.

HILARY FINCH

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To the

House of horrors

THE TIMES Wednesday 19th March 1997
A Reason to Rejoice
Birdy

With the general election fixed for May 1, we asked the three major parties to outline their policies for the future of Britain's housing

Our plans for the roof over your head

THE LABOUR PARTY

By NICK RAYNSFORD, MP
HOUSING SPOKESMAN

Current housing policies and programmes are hopelessly inadequate. A new approach is called for. In Labour's view there are four overriding priorities. First, we must learn the lessons of the 1980s. At that time all too many people overstretched themselves, believing that once they got their foot on the bottom step of the housing market, the escalator would carry them up to greater personal wealth. They made a terrible mistake and paid a very heavy price for it.

While house prices may rise ahead of general inflation for a year or two as we come out of recession, it is not realistic to expect substantial year on year increases in house prices while general inflation is held to 2 per cent or lower.

We also need to take steps to protect homeowners from the mis-selling of mortgages and related products, from other abuses in the market and from the risk of unnecessary repossession. Our proposals for tackling the re-emerging problem of gazumping have been widely welcomed, as have our plans for leasehold reform. Our flexible tenure proposals will both help people on modest incomes to progress by stages towards owner-occupation and assist others who, as a result of changing financial circumstance, might otherwise face the loss of their homes.

Labour offers a package of reforms to help to restore stability in the housing market and to provide new opportunities and safeguards for homeowners. At the same time we will revive the provision of social housing through local authorities, housing associations and new partnerships. This is the second key objective. We will release, on a phased basis, the receipts which councils have obtained from selling land and housing but which they are currently prevented from spending.

It must make sense to put these capital receipts back to use, building homes for the homeless and renovating run-down estates and, in the process, helping to generate jobs in the construction industry.

Thirdly, to increase flexibility in the market and opportunities for people to move areas, we will encourage a revival in good quality private rented accommodation. We support housing investment trusts as a mechanism for increasing



institutional investment in private renting and will be looking closely at how we can help such bodies to develop in the years ahead.

We also need to break down the growing polarisation in housing which has created concentrations of poverty and deprivation in certain parts of our country. Indeed, measures to tackle unemployment, crime and vandalism are equally essential. But housing policies play a vital part. We must ensure that new developments provide opportunities for people to rent or to buy without undue segregation between the tenures.

We must also ensure that rent and benefit policies make it possible for people to get off benefit and into work. Helping to build strong and mixed communities is a vital part of a new housing policy.

Finally, we must tackle the backlog of poor condition properties in all tenures. New public/private partnership can help to bring private investment into areas of older, unmodernised council housing. A new approach towards home renovation policy can ensure that public money is used more effectively to lever in additional private investment and make it possible to develop strategic area-based renovation programmes.

A national licensing scheme for multi-occupied houses will help to raise standards in this sub-section of the market where the worst conditions are to be found, and at the same time reduce the tragic loss of life through fires and carbon monoxide poisoning in such premises.

Our new environmental task force will help to tackle the problem of hard-to-heat properties and in the process enable elderly people on low incomes to enjoy affordable warmth in the winter months.



The two faces of Britain's housing stock: the private residence and the run-down council estate



THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

By DAVID CURRY, MP
HOUSING MINISTER

The most important challenge for the next government will be to combine a competitive economy with the delivery of effective and affordable welfare in the broadest sense. We have spent out how we will address this need in pension provision and care of the elderly and are already delivering these policies in housing. The heart of our policy is:

- A real choice of tenure to provide a mobile workforce and meet individual needs.
- Sustainable home ownership.
- Bringing new partners into social housing in recognition of the reality (however unpalatable) that no government is going to revert to large-scale public financing and subsidised housing, and addressing the problems of inner-city estates by bringing housing and regeneration policies together.

Over the past 18 years we have given millions the chance to buy a home for the first time in their lives. We have given council and some housing association tenants the right to buy their home at a discount. More than two million tenants have bought their homes since 1979, 1.7 million of them thanks to our Right to Buy policy.

Our economic policies are making it easier for first-time buyers to enter the market and we will continue to help council and housing association tenants who can afford it into home ownership. As a result, we expect a further 1.5 million people to become home owners over the next ten years.

But there are many people who do not want or cannot afford their own home. They also deserve a choice of housing. We have encouraged a thriving private rented sector. Since 1988, when we deregulated the sector allowing landlords to charge a market rent, the number of families living in private rented accommodation has increased by nearly 400,000. We will sustain the revival, encouraging more institutional investment through housing investment trusts.

We will continue to help housing associations and local housing companies to provide new housing at sub-market rents for families with low incomes. Since 1988, housing associations have had access to private finance. To date, they have secured £6.4 billion of private sector investment.

We must tackle the problem of the worst estates and give opportu-



nity to tenants locked into these municipal fiefdoms. The rationale behind housing transfers is to mobilise private sector funding for a public good. To date, 53 local authorities have transferred their housing to new landlords, raising more than £3.8 billion in private finance.

The new landlord buys the stock on the basis that it remains as social housing with sub-market rents. They can use private money to improve homes without increasing public spending and taxes. Transfers take place only with the consent of tenants.

The Housing Act 1996 enables councils to transfer their stock to a wider range of landlords, such as local housing companies which offer councils the chance to retain an interest in the stock.

This year's Budget contained a number of measures which make transfer even more attractive, including a three-year holiday from the LSVT receipts levy (local authorities were required to pay the Exchequer 20 per cent of what was left of any receipt arising from a transfer after any outstanding debt on the stock had been repaid) and more money for our Estates Renewal Challenge Fund.

Given the constraints on public expenditure across the developed world, transfers are the best way of getting more investment in the public sector stock.

Last, but not least, we are helping those in the greatest need. Between April 1990 and March 1996 we spent more than £180 million under the Rough Sleepers Initiative. As a result, the number of people sleeping on the streets of central London has fallen from more than 1,000 to under 290. We are continuing the scheme in central London and extending it to other areas.

WHERE I LIVE

I LIVE with my wife and three daughters in my constituency of Greenwich. Nick Raynsford writes. We have a comfortable house with plenty of space for us and our three cats. It is our only home. One of the great benefits of representing a London constituency is that one does not need to split one's life between separate London and constituency homes.

Our home is important to us and is a focus for a lot of activity. My wife, Anne, is a keen gardener and has spent much of the past four years transforming the garden. She and I share a study where we can work without getting under each other's feet.

I am very conscious of how lucky we are to have such a lovely home. It is a constant reminder of the benefit which people derive from having a secure base. It is one of my strongest political ambitions to ensure that every member of society has that prospect too.

Most MPs make nice comments about their constituencies but I can truly say with hand on heart, that Greenwich is a wonderful place to live. Tourists come to see the historic buildings and will come in even larger numbers to the Millennium Exhibition in three years' time. But Greenwich is not a museum. It is a genuine community and we are very proud and happy to live here.

THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

By DIANA MADDOCK, MP
HOUSING SPOKESWOMAN



WHERE I LIVE

Liberal Democrat policies for housing are based on our recognition of the diversity of people's needs. Not everyone wants to own their own home, and housing provision has to take into account variations in demand and cost.

The proposals we are putting forward are based on flexibility, to allow local authorities and developers to make the right decisions about how much new social housing is needed, and how to finance it. Our approach dictates that prevention is more efficient than treatment. Since homelessness is such a problem, it is surely wise to ensure that fewer people are being made homeless in the first place.

In the house price collapse of the early 1990s, a third of a million people lost their homes. Our housing policy addresses this by proposing to phase out universal mortgage interest tax relief for first-time buyers and replace it with a means-tested mortgage benefit, which would allow full payment of mortgage interest (up to a ceiling) for families on income support and low incomes. This saves the cost of rehousing evicted families and paying housing benefit for private rented accommodation.

As far as the private rented sector is concerned, it seems that the

present Government is preparing to put more of a burden upon it than it can possibly bear. The new changes in housing benefit will mean that more and more single benefit claimants will be seeking private sector lettings. The Government has done little or no research into the amount of quality accommodation available. These benefit restrictions need to be reversed.

In terms of new social housing, we propose to remove restrictions on local government and give it the freedom to invest more in social housing. We want to give local authorities the opportunity to invest by phasing the release of capital receipts according to the needs of individual areas. At the

same time we want radically to reform the way local authorities can raise the money to invest in housing.

By adopting the General Government Finance Deficit as the main measure of public borrowing, we would allow public accounts to show the true value of investment in homes, investment which saves money by taking families out of expensive temporary accommodation. This would also allow local authorities to set up housing corporations which could raise money through loans and investment.

We favour investment in bricks and mortar rather than expensive benefit subsidies — we've not forgotten that the cost of housing

benefit has soared from £4 billion to £10 billion in ten years.

There is much we can do to ensure that existing housing stock is used effectively. It seems scandalous that there are 790,000 empty properties in England and Wales. Research estimates that around 125,000 empty homes could be refurbished for less than £5,000 each. Under Liberal Democrat housing policies, local authorities could bring into use any property left empty without reasonable cause for more than 12 months.

We also have plan to refurbish existing housing: more than four million people are living in houses classed as unfit for habitation.

There is progress to be made in energy saving: my own Home Energy Conservation Act, which became law in 1995, went some way to ensuring that new and existing homes could be energy-efficient. Liberal Democrats are also advocating reducing VAT rating of energy-saving building materials.

Tenants should have the power to make decisions on serious matters such as competitive tendering. We are particularly concerned at new DoE proposals to award housing investment money only where local authorities have put in place a plan for transfer of social housing to the private sector.

Democrats are the largest party on the council. It is not just the council that is close. From my home I can walk to most places I need: my constituency office, the station and town centre shops and restaurants are only a few minutes away. I can also get to the leisure centre near by, and visit Christchurch Priory where there are regular concerts.

So my cottage is very important to me. It's a still point in a hectic world.

Now, of course, the Liberal

WHERE I LIVE

I LIVE in a 19th-century Victorian farmhouse — without the farm, David Curry writes. A very plain yellow Cambridgeshire brick cube, it was the sort of place my wife always said she could "do something with".

The "something" has been to add terraces, an open porch (replacing a sort of dog kennel of a tunnel) and shutters — my wife is French.

We've converted the bit of cereal field attached to the house into garden (the first year the farmer managed to harvest the hedge as well as the wheat, including a vegetable garden where I fight a permanent war to defend it from being used by my father as an "overflow" for plants surplus to the flower borders).

I love two things about the house. Inside, its orientation makes it very luminous. Outside, when I get home from London the air is sweet and soft and, at times, rich with the scent of laburnum and mahonia. The cycle of the garden, made up of the predictable seasons each punctuated by a thousand surprises (not all happy surprises), makes a necessary therapy for the conflicts of politics.

But therapy is not relaxation — a garden is unrelentingly demanding. It is the energy spent, not the energy saved, which is the greatest pleasure.

For sale: Major's wartime haven

Eve-Ann Prentice on a humble terraced cottage with an intriguing history

Just weeks before John Major faces the possible upheaval of finding a new house, the Norfolk cottage which was his evacuation home during the war has gone on sale.

The 15-month-old future Prime Minister was taken to the mid-terrace cottage in the remote village of Saham Toney, near the market town of Watton, by his mother and father after a doodlebug flying bomb exploded uncomfortably close to the Major family's home in Brixton and sent shards of glass flying into his cot just seconds after the infant had been lying in it.

John Major was probably too young to form vivid memories of his time at the four-bedroom cottage, which went on sale last week. But his elder brother, Terry Major-Ball, recalls the future Prime Minister being the subject of intense interest among some German prisoners of war staying in the village when they tried to teach the toddler the Nazi salute.

In his book, *Major Major*,

Memories of an Older Brother, Major-Ball writes: "That was the last straw. My mother Gwen flew at them and a group of English and German NCOs came to see what the fuss was about."

"They could not apologise enough. They reported the matter and said it would never happen again. In fact, we did not see any more prisoners."

The Majors took refuge in Norfolk in July 1944, when the aerial bombardment of the Blitz had ended but Londoners were being terrorised by doodlebugs and V2s — known as "flying gas mains" because the explosions caused by them were ascribed by the Government to gas main blasts. The Majors' next-door neighbours in London, who had earlier fled the Blitz to stay with relatives in Saham Toney, helped the future PM's family to find

accommodation in the village. The Majors stayed until April 1945, but kept a link with Saham Toney when John Major's sister Pat took a ginger cat, which she named Saham, back to London.

Present-day villagers in Saham Toney were said to be unaware of the link with Mr Major until Terry Major-Ball's book was published last year.

Audrey Pickering, whose family lived in the Majors' wartime refuge since the early 1940s, has put the house on the market for £55,000.

She said yesterday: "I thought they were pulling my leg when I was first told John Major had lived here. Then his brother came here, and he was a very nice man. Personally, I think John seems very nice, too, and I don't think he should be blamed for everything."

Mrs Pickering has lived in the

house for 14 years and her mother moved there nearly 33 years ago. She is selling because her husband, Michael, died recently and she is looking for somewhere smaller. "I love the house but I am hoping to find a little bungalow now," she said.

The house is described by the estate agents Mullenger & Co, who are selling it, as "a deceptively spacious mid-terrace cottage... only a short walk from the local primary school, shop/sub-post office and local pub."

Should Mr Major be tempted to return to his evacuation home, he will be pleased to know it has been considerably modernised since his days there — when there was no running water. In his book, Terry Major-Ball recalls fetching water from a well, whereas the bathroom today boasts a bidet as well as bath, wash basin and low-level WC.

So far no one has been to view. Anyone interested should contact Mullenger & Co in Watton, Norfolk, on 01453 883474.



John Major's home as a toddler: it was here that German prisoners tried to teach him the Nazi salute

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RACING: O'SULLEVAN FEATURED IN DOCUMENTARY TO MARK 150TH AINTREE SHOWPIECE

BBC unveils National treasures

By JULIAN MUSCAT

PETER O'SULLEVAN, the BBC racing commentator preparing to call his fifth Grand National, is to feature prominently in the build-up to the historic steeplechase on April 5.

Staff at the Grandstand programme, which commences at 12.15 on the big day, are compiling a feature on O'Sullivan's Grand National scrapbook in what will almost certainly be his last commentary on the great race. It has been O'Sullivan's long-held ambition to complete 50 years behind the microphone at Aintree.

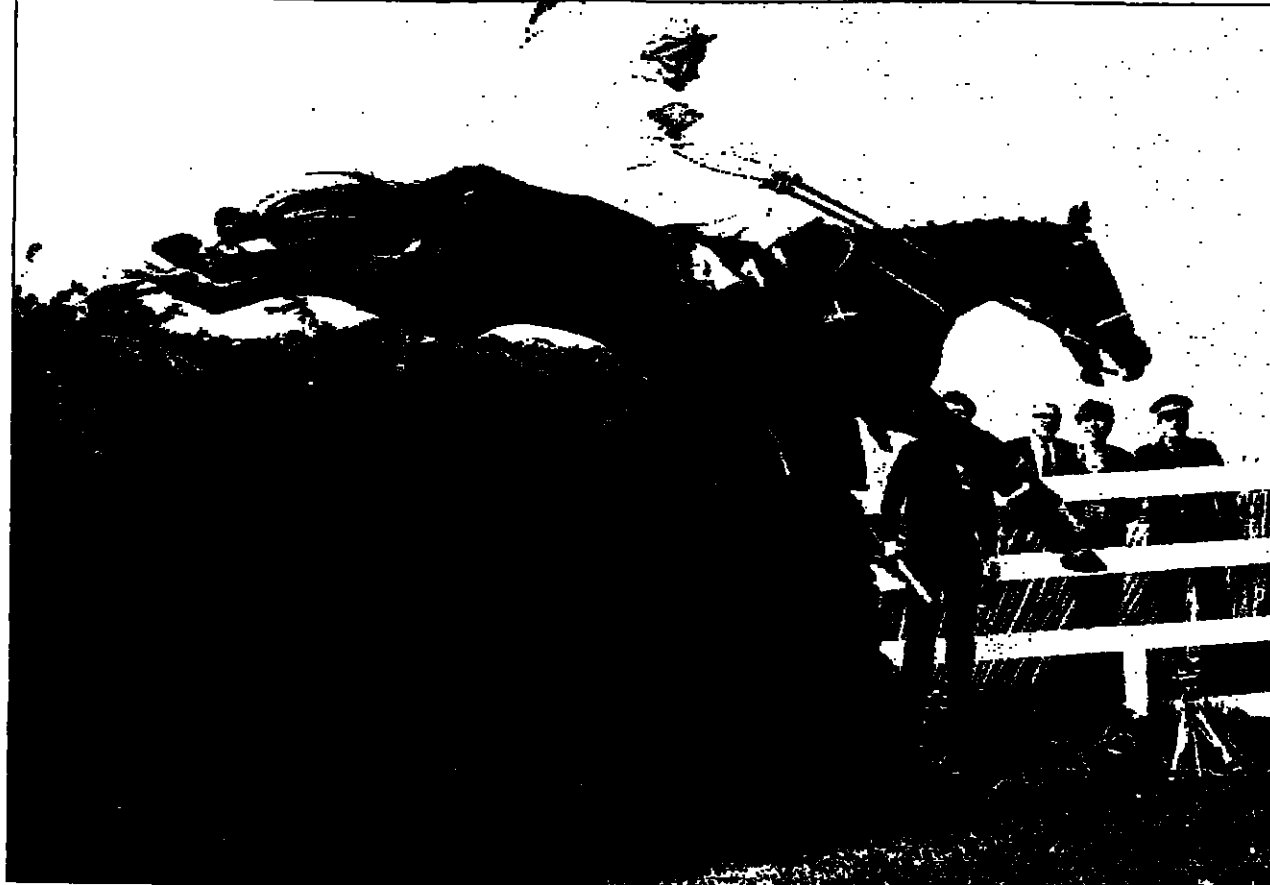
"It will be a big story on a big occasion," Dave Gordon, editor of Grandstand, said yesterday. "The piece with

Tony McCoy will be sidelined for ten days after being knocked unconscious when falling from Strong Tree in the last race at Uttoxeter yesterday.

Peter is one of a number of ideas we have to celebrate the 150th running of the Grand National. There are so many offbeat stories to choose from but Peter's achievement will be recognised. Additionally, the Aintree executive will unveil a bust of O'Sullivan on the course on Grand National day.

Known as "The Voice of Racing" for his mastery of the art, O'Sullivan spoke yesterday of the immense preparation required to commentate on one of the most unpredictable of sporting events. The thought of it filled him with terror. It was with gratitude, he said, that he could reflect on his close and lengthy association with the unique steeplechase.

Should Time For A Run prevail a fortnight on Saturday, a different kind of gratitude will be felt by an anonymous punter who laid



Aldaniti and Champion sail over Becher's Brook on their way to a famous victory in the 1981 Grand National

out £21,800 on the Irish-trained horse. The man, who walked into a William Hill betting shop in London with the cash yesterday, staked £10,000 at 25-1 and £10,000 at 20-1, paying tax on both bets. He stands to collect £450,000.

The BBC is also planning to increase its coverage of the three-day fixture, which commences on April 3. In addition to the daily live broadcasts, there will be a 25-minute highlights package on Saturday evening to round up the day's events. And to commemorate the 150th running, the corporation is to screen a 50-minute documentary, *Grand National Tales*, pro-

visionally programmed for 10.45pm on April 1. The sheer wealth of the BBC archives allows Desmond Lynam—who will front the Grand National broadcast from Aintree for the thirtieth time—to indulge in a narrative embracing heartbreak and nostalgia in equal measure.

The programme, more than a year in the making, does not dwell on the legend of Red Rum, as have so many previous portraits of the National. Red Rum is given his due, of course, but the making of *Grand National Tales* is its unearthing of the unusual, of a bewitched solicitor who can

recite all the fallers at every fence for the last 25 years; of a gaggle of giggling Singapore nightclub managers who make the annual pilgrimage; and of the man who for years interloped with jockeys leaving the weighing-room—pausing only to smile at the cameras.

"My personal favourite was Bob Champion's victory on Aldaniti in 1981," recalled Lynam, in London yesterday for a private screening of the documentary. "On radio the previous year he had Bob as our pundit. To be honest, we only asked him to try and cheer him up. Evidence of his cancer was all over him and

we never thought he'd be with us 12 months later. We were all in tears—I remember not being able to talk when I was supposed to."

Richard and Mark Pitman—father and son who, 18 years apart, were touched off in remarkably similar circumstances aboard Crisp and Garrison Savannah respectively—relive their nightmares with a light touch. And the sequence of Mark Pitman's then-girlfriend, as she watched Garrison Savannah tire up that daunting run-in, vividly illustrates just how fine is the line between victory and defeat in the world's most famous steeplechase.

The Grey Monk eyes Fairyhouse

FROM RICHARD EVANS IN DUBLIN

WITH Imperial Call, and Ungemid Missile unlikely to run, The Grey Monk is set to head the weights and lead a formidable British challenge for the Jameson Irish Grand National at Fairyhouse on Easter Monday.

Only four British-trained horses have won the race since it was first run in 1870, but yesterday's publication of the weights for the £100,000-added event saw no less than 17 British entries, including Gordon Richards's exciting chaser, who bypassed the Cheltenham Festival because of fast ground.

"The Grey Monk is an intended runner, provided the ground is okay," the Grey-stoke trainer said yesterday. "Twelve stone is not ideal but he is in great form."

David Nicholson has entered both Percy Smollett,

who should appreciate the right-handed Fairyhouse circuit, and St Mellion Fairway. Both are intended runners if there is decent ground.

Seven Towers, winner of the Midlands Grand National on Saturday, has been pencilled in along with Sister Stephanie, who finished third in the Uttoxeter race.

Mary Reveley, trainer of Seven Towers, said: "The horse will run only if it is soft because three miles five furlongs would not be a sufficient test otherwise."

Apart from the Irish National, another 20 British-trained horses are entered at the three-day meeting. Sparky Gayle, the Cathcart Chase winner, and Squire Silk, runner-up in the Arkle, could take on Dorans Pride, third in the Cheltenham Gold Cup, in the Power Gold Cup.

TOWCESTER

THUNDERER
2.10 Bay Blakeney, 2.40 Grooving, 3.10 The Towcester, 3.40 Strath Royal, 4.10 Ferraes, 4.40 Bollinger, 5.10 Lord Roubille.

The Times Private Handicapper's top ratings:
3.10 NO FIDDLING.

Carl Evans: 4.40 Bollinger.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM (GOOD IN PLACES) SIS

2.10 GRAFTON AMATEUR RIDERS SELLING HURDLE
(£1,825; 2m) (11 runners)
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FOOTBALL: NORWEGIAN FORWARD EXPECTED TO PLAY AT FILBERT STREET AS LONDON CLUB PURSUES PLACE IN EUROPE

Tottenham lifted by Iversen's striking recovery

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

TOTTENHAM Hotspur's modest revival, after successive victories against Sunderland and Leeds United, has resurrected the hopes of qualifying for the Uefa Cup next season. This evening they continue their quest to salvage something from an injury-ravaged FA Cup Premier League campaign when they play Leicester City, the Coca-Cola Cup finalists, at Filbert Street.

Though good news from the White Hart Lane treatment room has been scarce, it is likely that Steffen Iversen, the Norway Under-21 striker, will be able to play tonight. He was replaced eight minutes from the end of the 1-0 win against Leeds on Saturday and it was feared that ligament damage to his right knee could prematurely end his season.

However, a scan on Monday night provided a more accurate diagnosis. "Steffen has extensive bruising to the knee but the ligaments appear to be intact," Tony Lenaghan, the Tottenham physiotherapist, said yesterday. "He has trained and been running and if he can cope with the pain, then he should be OK to play."

Darren Anderton, who scored the winning goal against Leeds, may not be so fortunate. He has missed a large part of the season with groin and knee problems and is now troubled by a hamstring strain. "We need to make further investigations," Lenaghan said. "He might not be ready until the weekend."

Chris Armstrong, the Tottenham striker, has not played since December because of an ankle injury, which subse-

quently became infected, but his recovery has picked up pace. "Hopefully, I'm not too far away," he said yesterday. "All I need is a few reserve games under my belt and then maybe I can get back in the first team before the end of the season."

"I've lost a bit of fitness, I know that already, and I don't want to rush back before I'm ready. It's not worth trying to play half-fit and then making things worse."

Chelsea, who play Southampton at Stamford Bridge this evening, have delayed selection until Andy Myers, the defender, undergoes a fitness test. He was taken off during the second half of the 6-2 win against Sunderland on Sunday after a challenge from Alex Rae had left him with thigh, knee and shin injuries.

Mel Bush, the music promoter, has tabled a late bid to save Bournemouth, the struggling Nationwide League second division club that faces a winding-up order over unpaid taxes in the High Court tomorrow. Bush has made an undisclosed offer to the club's Receivers.

Through a £1 million takeover attempt from the Bournemouth Trust Fund was rejected by Lloyds Bank, the club's main creditor, last week. Bush's intervention could earn the club much-needed breathing space.

"It will be good to be able to go to the court and show them that we have two interested parties," Alan Lewis, the Receiver, said yesterday. "Things look a bit brighter than they were."

David Busst, the Coventry City defender whose career was cut short by injury, will profit from a visit to Highfield Road by Manchester United. Busst suffered horrific leg injuries playing for Coventry at Old Trafford and Alex Ferguson, the United manager, has agreed to take a United side to play a Coventry XI, including Ally McCoist and Paul Gascoigne, in a benefit match on May 16.



Dichio, the QPR striker, who has been courted by Sampdoria, the Italian club

Dichio may move to Sampdoria

DANIELE DICHIO, the Queens Park Rangers striker, is expected to move to Sampdoria, the Italian league club, on a free transfer this summer.

Stewart Houston, his manager, expressed surprise at reports that Dichio, who rejected a move to Wimbledon last week, had already informed the club of his plans to sign a three-year deal with Sampdoria when his present contract expires in June.

"It is news to me but not a great surprise that he wants to go elsewhere," Houston said. "We agreed to sell him to Wimbledon last week, but he declined their offer and said

he would stay with us for the rest of the season. I was happy with that but I haven't been told of any move to Sampdoria."

QPR will not receive a penny if Dichio joins Sampdoria as a free agent under the Bosman ruling. Dichio, 22, could even become an Italy international if he establishes himself in Serie A, despite being born in London, because his father is Italian.

Arsenal yesterday signed Alexander Manninger, 19, a goalkeeper from Casino Graz, the Austrian club, for a fee believed to be around £500,000 after he impressed Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal

manager, in a two-day trial at Highbury. Manninger has returned to Casino Graz for the remainder of the season.

Celtic yesterday learnt that Paolo Di Canio, their striker, will miss their Scottish League match against Dunfermline Athletic on Saturday after receiving a one-match ban.

Hugh Dallas, the referee at the match against Rangers last Sunday, showed Di Canio a yellow card when he squared up to Ian Ferguson after the final whistle at Celtic Park. It technically added up to a sending-off because he had been booked earlier in the game.

Dowie returns to spur Northern Ireland

IAIN DOWIE, the West Ham United striker, yesterday celebrated his comeback from injury with a swift return to the Northern Ireland squad for the back-to-back World Cup qualifying matches against Portugal and Ukraine.

Dowie scored both goals in Northern Ireland's 2-0 win over Albania in their last group nine qualifier and returns after missing the games against Italy and Belgium with a broken ankle.

Bryan Hamilton, the Northern Ireland manager, said: "I'm delighted that Iain is fit again. He always leads by example and is a very important influence on our squad."

The first match is against Portugal in Belfast on Saturday week, with the second away to Ukraine in Kiev four days later. Other notable inclusions are James Quinn, of Blackpool, and Philip Mulryne, of Manchester United, who both scored in the victory over Belgium last month.

Michael Hughes, of West Ham, and Kevin Horlock, of Manchester City, are included, but can only play against Ukraine as they are suspended for the Portugal game. Hamilton is already looking for another goalkeeper as Roy Carroll, of Hull City, has pulled out through injury. Hamilton is aware that his team must win both games to keep their World Cup hopes afloat but remains confident. Although Portugal won on their last trip to Windsor Park two years ago, Hamilton said: "Things have changed since then. We've put together some good performances and I believe we have the talent to beat them."

SQUAD: T. Wright (Manchester City), A. Pettit (Nottingham Forest), B. Hunter (Reading), C. Hill (Leicester City), N. Lennon (Leeds United), S. Morrison (Sheff Wed), J. Quinn (Blackpool), K. Horlock (Manchester City), J. Nolan (Sheff Wed), J. McGahey (Port Vale), K. Gillespie (Newcastle United), N. Wootton (Sheff Wed), J. Magilton (Southampton), S. Morrow (Wolves), G. Tappin (Barnsley), J. McGahey (Sheff Wed), P. Mulryne (Manchester United), I. Dowie (West Ham United), B. O'Grady (St Johnstone), D. Griffin (St Johnstone).

Gallagher fights back to achieve his golden goal

Euro 96 may have been a chastening experience for England's players and supporters, the penalty shootout defeat to Germany in the semi-finals causing suffering on an apparently epidemic scale. Though the lasting memories are unpleasant, especially for Gareth Southgate, time has healed.

For Dermot Gallagher, referee, the European championship nightmare went on and on... for nine months. He snapped an Achilles tendon in his left leg, after only 28 minutes of the group B match between France and Bulgaria, and was forced to retire hurt.

His tournament had ended, barely before it had started, and his career, too, appeared threatened. It took almost

four months for the damage to be correctly diagnosed, followed 18 days in plaster, after surgery, and two months on crutches. Rehabilitation has been slow, painful and frustrating. Only last week, finally, did he return to the FA Cup Premiership stage.

"I remember awarding a goal kick, running backwards and then turning," Gallagher, who takes charge of the game between Middlesbrough and Blackburn Rovers at the Riverside Stadium tonight, said. "I felt this almighty pain in my leg but thought it was either a spasm or I'd torn a calf muscle. The leg then went dead. I couldn't feel a thing."

Gallagher, unable to walk, handed over the whistle to Paul Durkin. Subsequent treatment, plus hours of phys-

Russell Kempson talks to a leading referee whose career was threatened by injury

iotherapy, failed to pinpoint the root cause and it was not until he underwent an operation in October that progress became tangible. "It was not an ordinary snap of the tendon, it had not split apart," he said. "What had happened was that I had snapped longways, north to south, in an elliptical shape. It was 1½ inches deep and the piece in the middle had decomposed, so it had to be cut out."

As one of the most highly regarded officials in Europe — he refereed the FA Cup final between Liverpool and Manchester United last season and has also blown the

whistle in Brazil, South Africa and Qatar — the inactivity could have proved soul-destroying. The gnawing doubt over whether he would resume his career only added to his sense of foreboding.

The longer it went on, there was always that fear," Gallagher, 39, said, "but I knuckled down, kept myself as mentally and physically fit as possible and did everything my physio told me to."

"I must have gone to watch about 50 matches, from the Premiership right down to the Hellenic League, and I've attended referees' meetings all over the place. I needed to get

going round in circles — but it's all right now."

Gallagher was afforded a generous welcome at Hillsborough and White Hart Lane, disproving the theory that most Premiership clubs view referees as no more than a necessary evil. "It surprised me, but meant a lot," he said. "The Sheffield game was on a Wednesday, lottery night, and I felt as though I had won it. I felt euphoric after the game and the next day, too. It was a great day when I first made it onto the Premiership list and it feels as if I've now done it a second time."

"Every game is now so important to me. I look back to when I thought it might all be going to end, all those dark moments. It's like I'm starting all over again."

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Boston 126, Milwaukee 117; Atlanta 112, Dallas 107; Utah 114, Charlotte 98; Cleveland 85, Detroit 82; Washington 103, San Antonio 85; LA Lakers 113, Denver 94; Phoenix 118, Golden State 95.

BIATHLON

NOVOSIBIRSK, Russia: World Cup: 27m (Men): 1. L. Greller (Austria), 2. M. Stenmark (Sweden), 3. R. Grönborg (Sweden), 4. S. Tassier (Russia), 5. S. Tassier (Russia), 6. S. Tassier (Russia), 7. S. Tassier (Russia), 8. S. Tassier (Russia), 9. S. Tassier (Russia), 10. S. Tassier (Russia).

BOXING

GLASGOW: Cruiserweight (160lb): Danny Southern (Barbados) vs. Liam Richardson (Wales), rsc 5th rd; Light-middle (140lb): Billy Collins (Ireland) vs. Jason Zorzi (Ireland), rsc 4th rd; Super-bantam (122lb): Sean Anderson (Ireland) vs. Neil Parry (Ireland), rsc 4th rd; Super-bantam (122lb): Sean Anderson (Ireland) vs. Neil Parry (Ireland), rsc 4th rd; Super-bantam (122lb): Sean Anderson (Ireland) vs. Neil Parry (Ireland), rsc 4th rd.

BOXING

PERTH: British women's indoor championships: Singles: Semi-finals: C. McCallister (Scotland) vs. P. Nisbet (Scotland), 21-20; S. Hazell (England) vs. M. McCallister (Scotland), 21-20; Final: Hazell (England) vs. McCallister (Scotland), 21-20; Pairs: McCallister (Scotland) vs. Nisbet (Scotland), 21-20; Final: McCallister (Scotland) vs. Nisbet (Scotland), 21-20.

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FOOTBALL

WORLD CUP, Asian zone Group A: Taiwan 3, Bangladesh 1; Malaysia 0, Saudi Arabia 0; China 1, Laos 1.

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SAILING

Edwards gains backing for global venture

BY EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

TRACY EDWARDS was finally able to announce a substantial sponsorship package yesterday which will enable her and an all-women crew to have a go at winning the Jules Verne Trophy for the fastest non-stop circumnavigation of the globe. The Royal SunAlliance will back her to the tune of £4.27 million.

The announcement at Greenwich followed frustration last year when long negotiations with a potential sponsor fell through, forcing the postponement of the attempt, which had been planned for January this year. Now Edwards has rescheduled the start for January next year at the end of a training programme which will include the Transatlantic Challenge in late May and the Round Britain Challenge in July.

Edwards will sail the Nigel Irens-designed 92ft catamaran, ENZA New Zealand, in which Sir Peter Blake and Sir Robin Knox-Johnston won the Jules Verne in 1994 after a voyage lasting just 74 days, 22 hours, 17min 22sec. Edwards and her crew will be hard-pressed to better that performance, though they will be aided by recent modifications to the catamaran.

This will be a high-profile campaign for Edwards, which will be followed closely by the public and by the male-dominated grand prix sailing fraternity, among whom are many who predict that she and her colleagues will have their hands full coping with the giant yacht.

Edwards, however, is delighted to have secured such a substantial sponsorship package, which is made up of a sailing budget thought to be around £2 million, with the remainder devoted to worldwide marketing of the project. "I am thrilled to have the Royal SunAlliance as our sponsor," Edwards said. "From the outset, their enthusiasm has been overwhelming."

In the BT Global Challenge, Richard Merriweather's Commercial Union caused a scare yesterday when one of her EPRB transmitters was swept overboard, automatically activating a satellite distress signal which was picked up in Australia from a position about 1,400 miles east of the Kerguelen Islands. Merriweather quickly reported the loss of the device and the false alarm was identified. Group 4 is the race leader with 3,700 miles to sail to Cape Town.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Pendlebury to coach Blue Sox

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

HALIFAX Blue Sox will today announce the appointment of John Pendlebury, the Wigan assistant coach and a former Halifax player, as their coach. He will succeed Steve Sims, the Australian, who departed for Thrum Hall three weeks ago.

The appointment of Pendlebury, a member of Halifax's 1987 Challenge Cup-winning side, brings the number of home-grown coaches among the 11 English Super League clubs to six in an increasing trend away from bringing coaches in from overseas.

Martin Dermott, the former Great Britain hooker, is thinking of retiring after the surprise decision by Warrington this week to give him and two other international players, Willie Swann, of Western Samoa, and Mateaki Mafi, of Tonga, free transfers, after defeats by Salford and Bradford Bulls.

Dermott, 29, was seen as central to Warrington's plans when he arrived last September from Wigan. The last two of his 12 years at Central Park were dogged by persistent injury, but Dermott had fought his way back only to find himself unwanted.

Andy Platt is having treatment for a hamstring injury but the prop is confident of being fit for Salford's Silk Cut Challenge Cup semi-final against St Helens at Central Park on Saturday.

SNOOKER

White has title in his sights

FROM PHIL YATES IN CO KILDARE

JIMMY WHITE has not won the Benson and Hedges Irish Masters since 1986, but last night he confidently predicted that he can win the 1997 event here at Goffs on Sunday. Not even the prospect of facing Stephen Hendry, the world champion, in the next round appeared to worry the Londoner, 34, after an impressive 6-3 first-round victory over Alan McManus.

White suffered a mid-match stutter against his Scottish opponent after capturing the opening four frames, but he went on to reach only his second quarter-final of the season.

Hendry has prevailed in their recent meetings in Aberdeen and Bangkok, though their encounter in the Thailand Open last week was a disappointing affair. "Stephen is like a machine, but if I can get past him there is no reason why I can't go all the way," White, whose appearance again drew a large crowd to the Goffs Arena, said. "Every match now is part of the build-up to the world championship."

In contrast, these are worrying times for McManus, the world No.6. He has drifted to No.11 on the provincial world rankings and, against White, potted only six balls in the first three frames.

RESULT: First round: J. White (Eng) 6-3 A. McManus (Sco) 6-3.

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LIVE CHAMPIONS CUP ACTION

5/6 PORTO 12/5 DRAW MAN. UTD. 5/2

Das Antas, Kick-off 7.30pm, Live on ITV.

CORRECT SCORE

5/1 PORTO	1-0	20/1 DRAW	2-2
13/2 PORTO	2-0	7/1 MAN. UTD.	1-0
7/1 PORTO	2-1	12/1 MAN. UTD.	2-0
5/1 DRAW	1-1	12/1 MAN. UTD.	2-1

Other scores on request.

FIRST GOALSCORER

5/1 JARDEL (P)	10/1 EDMILSON (P)
6/1 DOMINGOS (P)	11/1 BECKHAM (M)
7/1 SOLSKJAER (M)	16/1 JOAO COSTA (P)
15/2 CANTONA (M)	40/1 MAY (M)

Own goals do not count. Other players on request. Above bets, extra time does not count.

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Calls cost 50p per minute

When the film cameras first went to war

First night back from holiday and what do we have? Child sex abuse, forcibly arranged marriages and the Boer War. I was almost too depressed to begin. By the end of the evening I was still depressed (these are not exactly subjects to gladden the heart, however well they are tackled) but at least my faith in documentary-making had been restored. Two of the three films were very impressive, leaving just one to be filed away for later under "well-intentioned failure".

Pick of the night - just - was *Timewatch: The Boer War* (BBC2), which had the edge largely because it dealt with a subject that was not just unpalatable but also unfashionable. For it is a cruel paradox that the millions of us moved regularly to tears by the losses of the First World War know next to nothing about the events of 15 years earlier. Somehow, it is too far away and too long ago to count.

William Cran, writer and director of *Timewatch*, lost little time in putting that right. Indeed, so little time that just occasionally - as generals came and went at reckless speed - it was difficult keeping up. But if you caught a couple of episodes of *Rhodes* and knew your Mafeking from your Ladysmith, you probably managed.

Cran's initial thesis was that the Boer War was effectively the first conflict fought under what quickly became the unrelenting gaze of the mass media. As opening these goes, this was interesting enough and the opening scenes were duly filled by flickering film footage recorded by pioneering cameramen such as William Dickson and by black and white stills taken by the first generation of photo-journalists. But this was not the end, more a means to the end.

These images, and the accounts written by the likes of Winston Churchill, Edgar Wallace and

Arthur Conan Doyle, were used to tell the story of the war. Not just the story that the British Army censors wanted, but the whole story - the terrible tactical blunders that were made and would be made again to far worse effect 15 years later, the Boers' switch to guerrilla warfare, the British use of concentration camps, the scorched earth policy... and so it went on.

The reports by Churchill, Wallace and the correspondent from *The Daily Telegraph* who questioned the wisdom of advancing slowly in close ranks towards an enemy armed with Mauser rifles were read with the sort of public accent that you would expect. Ditto Dickson, who by virtue of being a Scot, got the dulcet Bill Paterson. The correspondents from the *Manchester Guardian*, however, were not so fortunate. Their reports were read in a nasal, northern



Matthew Bond

white that bordered on parody. Linked together in time-honoured *Timewatch* style with modern footage of the battlefields and the faultless hindsight of a fairly partisan bunch of military historians, the contemporary accounts allowed Cran to hit both his targets: to tell the story of an often forgotten war and to show how it served as a ghastly rehearsal for what was to follow.

The sexual abuse of children seems rarely off our screens at the moment. Three weeks ago the great debate was whether Peter Kosminsky's *No Child of Mine*, the story of the serial abuse of a 12-year-old girl, was too hot for TV. The matter, as I recall, was never satisfactorily resolved.

No such problems, I suspect, await *Witness: Loss of Innocence* (Channel 4). That's because the starting point for Leanne Klein's absorbing film was basically that shared by upmarket middle-class dinner parties - that actually there's not much child abuse around, but there are a few awful lot of interfering busybodies trying to prove otherwise and doing immense damage to family relationships in the process.

Klein was more impartial than that summary would suggest. She gave social services and the police the chance to tell their story, just as she did the family whose lives have

been permanently blighted by a remark made by a three-year-old to her playgroup leader. Daddy had committed the unpardonable crime of not being very good at wiping his daughter's bottom. Cue social services, the police, the full Big Brother disaster.

What she most tellingly revealed were the structural weaknesses in an unarguably well-intentioned system, particularly the fact that everything appears to be kept on file. Of the 1,000 families investigated each week, only one in seven is found to be "at risk". That leaves six out of seven struggling to rebuild lives that could have been disrupted by a single malicious call or misinterpreted remark. But the hurt fades, doesn't it?

No, said the mother of the family providing the main case history: "It isn't all right, it never will be all right." And no, said the female

officer from a child protection unit, who despite her tact and charm had yet to come to terms with the problems of securing a successful prosecution: "Even if you don't get a conviction there's a great stigma attached. And that does not depress you, then perhaps the proud admission from the male social worker that he didn't bathe his four-year-old daughter - because that's where abuse starts - will. Finally, the one dud of the evening, Network First (ITV), which set out to retell the well-chronicled story of the two Birmingham sisters forced into marriage in Yemen 16 years ago without checking whether they had a new ending. They didn't. What they had was a crackly tape recording of the one sister still in Yemen - now 30 and the mother of six - insisting that she wanted to stay there: "Don't give me the past any more." Alas, it was too late.

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

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CHOICE

Seven Wonders of the World BBC2, 7.00pm

Although the format is partly borrowed from *Desert Island Discs*, the idea of getting scientists to pick seven things that leave them in awe has produced excellent viewing. Among fans of the show is Sir Alec Guinness, whose diaries cannot stop enthusing over a programme featuring Miriam Rothschild. The new series is launched by Aubrey Manning, an urban planning expert from the University of Edinburgh. His wonders are mainly drawn from the natural world and include an ancient yew tree, the dance of the honey-bee, the sadly extinct Tasmanian tiger and the Grand Canyon. But Manning also pays homage to human ingenuity, choosing a mechanical device called the hi-and-miss governor and, despite his lack of religious faith, Durham Cathedral.

An Inspector Calls: Special Investigations Channel 4, 8.30pm

If the work of the Lancashire Trading Standards Office sounds less than gripping, then tune in and prepare to be surprised. Ticking off a bakery for not having price labels on its cream buns may be trivial stuff and helping an elderly woman to sort out a complaint about a three-piece suite is hardly doing a good deed when dealing with the crime of the century. But there is also Tim Cogan. Wearing sunglasses and a football shirt, he heads the office's investigations squad. These are the guys at the sharp end, and their prime target is counterfeiters. Cogan, reckoned as a counterfeiter, is a multi-million-pound industrialist, a pair with drug dealing and just as nasty. We follow him and the team as they are joined by the police in a raid on a factory suspected of turning out jeans under famous labels.

Modern Times: The Way of All Flesh BBC2, 9.00pm

Although *Modern Times*, which normally deals with the mores of contemporary Britain, may seem an odd slot for a venture into the history of sex, there will be no argument about the cogency of Adam Curtis's film. In 1951 an American woman, Henrietta Lacks, died of cancer. Cells taken from her body have been growing and multiplying ever since. For decades they gave scientists the hope of finding a cure for cancer and were at the root of a campaign that involved two American Presidents, Johnson and Nixon, as well as Hollywood luminaries including Bing Crosby and Joan Crawford. Soviet scientists also became involved, giving the search for a cancer virus a place in the Cold War. Meanwhile the Lacks family was growing angry at what it saw as exploitation. Curtis reconstructs the story with a blend of stylistic panache and rigorous, absorbing detail.

Countryside Undercover: Bitter Harvest Channel 4, 9.00pm

Viewers of the recent BBC documentary on the mangelout will have noticed the huge discrepancy between the pay of those producing the vegetable and the profit of the supermarket chain which sells it. The mangelout was filmed in Africa but this time makes a similar point much closer to home. The film features Mandy Samara, who spent three months undercover as a casual worker on English farms. Her job was to pick carrots, leeks and lettuce for supermarkets and it was not a pleasant experience. Not only was she back-breaking and miserably paid, but she was humiliated, bullied, exploited and humiliated. Although the industry is still shown how little minimum wage, Samara shows how little this protection is worth. Peter Waymark

HTV

6.00am GMTV (S483890)

9.25 Chain Letters (T) (4248242)

9.55 Regional News (S110529)

10.00 The Time, the Place (S6154)

10.30 This Morning (S423058)

12.20pm Regional News (7019426)

12.30 News (T) and weather (S422109)

12.55 Shortland Street (S327600)

1.25 Home and Away (T) (S423618)

1.50 Vanessa (T) (S423618)

2.00 News (S41895)

3.25 Regional News (T) (S201138)

3.30 Tots TV (S11285)

3.50 Soapy and Co (S032890)

4.10 Animalia (S672884)

4.20 Pinky and the Brain (S252703)

4.40 Zone (T) (S423722)

5.10 Look and Cook (T) (S423703)

5.40 News (T) and weather (S73890)

6.00 Home and Away (T) (S484677)

6.25 HTV News (S24513)

6.30 HTV News (T) (S60890)

6.50 Coronation Street (S483890)

7.00 The Big Breakfast (S3066)

7.00 Bewitched (S2884)

9.30 Yagelloni (S03884)

12.00pm House to House (S5548)

12.30 Ellen (S7790)

1.00 Sooty (S6155)

1.30 Film: 90,000 Suspects (S49513)

3.30 Collectors' Lot (S161)

4.00 Fifteen-to-One (S28)

4.30 Wild Britain (S180)

5.00 5 Pump (S7635)

5.30 Countdown (S432)

6.00 Newyddion 6 (S199613)

6.05 Heno (S43203)

6.35 Jacpot (S44703)

7.00 Pobl y Cwm (S71364)

7.25 Ffleming (S703161)

8.00 Phocart Insight into the modelling industry, as seen through the eyes of four would-be Welsh supermodels (S3819)

8.30 Newyddion (S436)

9.00 Spin City An ordinary man on the street acts as mayor for the day (S4906)

9.30 Roseanne Mike Tyson, Don King and Steven Seagal make guest appearances (S2426)

10.00 Brookside The Simpson family near breaking point and Bel is comforted by the belief that counselling will prove the solution (S19567)

10.35 ER Greene at last finds romance at work (S3161)

11.30 Caroline in the City Annie and Caroline go man-hunting (S2260)

12.00 Under the Moon Sports magazine (S15338)

2.30am NBA XXX American basketball action (S7881)

4.00 Schools: Scientific Eyes (T) (S44914)

5.35 Terrytoons (S501778) Ends at 6.00

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:

12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (S327600)

5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (S260703)

6.25-6.50 Central News (S0567)

1.45am Funky Bunker (S53858)

2.45 The Chart Show (S415556)

3.40 Central Jobfinder '97 (S54488)

5.20 Asian Eye (S529575)

As HTV West except:

12.20pm-12.30 Illuminations (S7019426)

12.55-1.25 Emmerdale (S327600)

5.10-5.40 Home and Away (S260703)

6.00 Meridian Tonight (S199180)

6.20-6.50 Home Truths (S43285)

5.00am FreeScreen (S7310)

As HTV West except:

12.19pm Anglia Air Watch (S7194181)

12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (S327600)

5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (S260703)

6.25 Anglia Weather (S25242)

6.25-6.50 Anglia News (S0567)

10.29 Anglia Air Watch (S7194181)

Starts: 6.00am Sesame Street (S4838)

7.00 The Big Breakfast (S3066)

9.00 Bewitched (S2884)

9.30 Yagelloni (S03884)

12.00pm House to House (S5548)

12.30 Ellen (S7790)

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CHANNEL 4

6.00am Sesame Street (S4838)

7.00 The Big Breakfast (S3066)

9.00 Bewitched (S2884)

9.30 Schools: Good Health (T) (S03884) 9.45 Book Box (T) (S03884) 9.50 Stage Two Science Class (T) (S03884) 10.15 The French Programme 10.35 Irish Scientists and Inventors: John Henslow, Sir Isaac Newton and Robert Boyle 10.55 Maths Book 11.07 Lost Animals: Gilbert's Potoroo 11.15 The Mix (T) 11.30 Rat-A-Tat-Tat 11.45 First Edition

12.00 House to House (S5548)

12.30pm Baby It's You (S491) (T) (S7790)

1.00 Ellen Auld and Ellen throw a hen party for Page (T) (S5155) 1.30 Hand to Hand (S4807567) 1.35 Through the Glass Ceiling, narrated by Alan Bennett (S058800)

1.55 Dads: A Crooked Road (1954, b/w) with Mickey Rooney, Dianne Foster. A drama about a mechanic and racing driver who is led astray by a woman and her gangster boyfriend. Directed by Richard Quire (T) (S8912109)

3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (S161) 4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (S28) 4.30 Countdown (T) (S432) 5.00 Paddy's Field (T) (S432) 6.00 Paddy's Field (T) (S432) 6.30 Paddy's Field (T) (S432) 7.00 Channel 4 News (T) (S3842)

7.55 Back Home of Science Why have we failed to apply evolutionary principles to our own thought processes? (S27258)

8.00 Brookside (T) (S3819)

8.30 An Inspector Calls: Special Investigations The work of trading standards officers (T) (S426)

9.00 Countryside Undercover: Bitter Harvest Live for casual farmworkers in England (T) (S4906)

9.30 Forlorn TV Father Lionel Farnthorpe presents more tales of the unlikely, including an attempt to recreate extinct animals and a 35,000-year-old warrior who has returned to hold classes near Seattle (T) (S2426)

10.00 ER: Night Shift Medical drama series. Mark Greene (Anthony Edwards) jeopardises his career but finds romance at work and somebody knows about Carter and Keaton (T) (S664)

11.00 Friends New Gingrich's sister, Candace, guest-stars as a minister who officiates at Ross's former wife's lesbian wedding (T) (S451)

11.30 Cheers The rivalry between Cheers and Gary's Old Town Tavern intensifies (T) (S2260)

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5



RACING 43

Voice of racing helps to unravel National treasures

SPORT

WEDNESDAY MARCH 19 1997

RUGBY UNION 44

Canford triumph at first attempt in Rosslyn Park sevens

Fans' behaviour under scrutiny

United need peace and prosperity

FROM ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT
IN OPORTO

AS Manchester United's flight circled Oporto airport yesterday, held up in the traffic swelled by the team's 10,000 travelling supporters, Alex Ferguson, the manager, reflected on the modicum of caution it is his duty to instil.

"We don't want to do anything silly," he opined. "It would take a tremendously inspired performance by Porto to win this tie now. But they will have their pride, they will come out looking for that early goal, and we will have to be professional, to do our job properly."

That said, the mission is, of course, well in hand. But taking a four-goal lead to a team whose supporters are as passionate as any in Europe does not invite complacency. History rules it out, for 19 years ago, in this very stadium, United lost 4-0.

Nevertheless, England needs two victories tonight. Not since 1985, the year of Heysel, have the English champions reached the semi-finals of the European Cup, nor have so many English supporters been abroad to follow their club since then. They must beware the intoxication of glory. It was there in both airports yesterday. As the United players filed through the customs lounge in Manchester they walked into a throng of backslapping supporters, many of them already reeking of drink. And as they disembarked after the 2½-hour flight to northern Portugal, where the temperatures approached 25C, the hordes were there again.

One of them, entertainingly enough, took a ride on the baggage carousel, filming the players and directors on a camcorder as he was carried by. So far, so good. But in the stadium tonight there will be

450 police and outside it there will be many more forces of the law, including armed units specially flown in from Lisbon. That old, dangerous cocktail, Latin chaos and the English reputation for violence, is coming together.

For the most part, these supporters will be just what United need in the Estadio das Antas. They will pit their voices against the 40,000 home fans in the 50,000-capacity stadium.

The British Embassy is hoping for peace but knows that only 6,400 of United's

Trafford two weeks ago, he now shuns even his own press, taking Porto out of town.

Oliveira is a man beleaguered. For two thirds of this season his team was omnipotent, uncatchable in the Portuguese league and conquerors of AC Milan in the Champions' League. In 27 games at home and abroad, Porto had conceded 12 goals; but before, during and after the meeting with United, their nerve broke. In their next five games, the defence shipped another 12.

Jorge Nuno Pinto da Costa, the president of the club, called upon the citizens of Oporto to regard defeat in England as exaggerated and not an occasion for "inconsequent despair". Speaking for his hidden coach, the president was well aware that another home defeat, following last Friday, when Porto succumbed to Sporting Lisbon, their arch rivals, for the first time in 21 years on their own ground, will bring the club under even more intense scrutiny.

The rest of the country has grown tired of Porto's supremacy. In Lisbon, they are only too eager to believe all manner of allegations about Porto's bribery of referees, including one relating to the semi-final of the Cup Winners' Cup in 1984, when they defeated Aberdeen. That Aberdeen team was managed by Ferguson. If vengeance is any part of his motivation on this visit, one would not detect it. Ferguson has other things, such as a pulled hamstring, a damaged ankle and a thigh muscle strain on his mind.

He is unlikely to start with Andy Cole, whose form lately has been the best of his United career, because why should United risk a goalscorer whose left thigh is sore? Indeed, the emphasis will be on containing the Portuguese pride and passion in midfield. Gary Neville trained last night and appears ready to play despite two stitches in a swollen ankle, but Ryan Giggs, who probably gave the performance of his life in tearing Porto asunder two weeks ago, has a hamstring strain and may not be risked.

Hence Ferguson may use Jordi Cruyff on the left of midfield. But, no matter, it is for Porto to rediscover their threat and to overcome the palpable fear which Hilario, their goalkeeper, admits he felt in advance of meeting Cantona and Co the first time.

Dichio departs, page 46
Midweek View, page 46



The Manchester United players were in relaxed mood as they arrived at Oporto airport yesterday. Photograph: Alex Livesey/Allsport

Klinsmann may prove Royle attraction

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

JURGEN KLINSMANN, the Germany captain, announced yesterday that he will be leaving Bayern Munich at the end of the season. The surprise move is sure to alert English clubs and lead to increased speculation that he could return to the FA Carling Premiership that he graced with Tottenham Hotspur two seasons ago.

Klinsmann, 32, is unlikely to return to White Hart Lane, which he left only 12 months into his two-year contract. His premature departure, after he had scored 29 goals, proved bitter and acrimonious, with Alan Sugar, the Tottenham chairman, claiming that he had been betrayed.

Although Klinsmann is understood to have had offers to play in Spain, Everton and Nottingham Forest could also join the chase. Each has

substantial transfer funds at its disposal and Joe Royle, the Everton manager, has long been an admirer of the much-travelled forward.

Royle flew to Germany to watch him play for Bayern in the Bundesliga recently and is keen to strengthen a side that lacks a consistent goalscorer. He is also believed to be preparing an improved offer for Trevor Sinclair, the Queens Park Rangers winger.

Klinsmann has decided to invoke a clause in his contract, which is not due to expire until June next year, that allows him to leave on a free transfer at the end of the season. He has become disillusioned with the bickering at the club and at criticism from Franz Beckenbauer, the Bayern chairman, and Lothar Matthäus, the club captain.

"I had a talk with Beckenbauer last week and told him I would probably go

abroad next season," Klinsmann, who has also played for Stuttgart, Internazionale and AS Monaco, said yesterday. "I don't seem to fit in here. I wanted to tell Bayern now so that they can plan for the future."

Beckenbauer, who played the key role in bringing Klinsmann back to Germany,



Klinsmann: disillusioned

said: "It's a shame. We wanted to keep Jürgen a lot longer. But it's his decision and we have to accept it."

George Graham's troubled reign as manager of Leeds United hit a new low yesterday when Carlton Palmer, the former England midfielder player, made a transfer request and Tony Yeboah was fined and told to lose weight.

Yeboah, the Ghana striker, was fined two weeks' pay for ripping off his shirt and throwing it at Graham when he was substituted in the 1-0 Premiership defeat by Tottenham Hotspur at White Hart Lane on Saturday.

Graham would not disclose the amount of the fine. "That will remain private but I have told Tony to get back to his playing weight," Graham said. "That means he will have to lose just under a stone. I've looked at the weight he was when he came here and the

weight he is now and he has quite a bit to lose."

Palmer, 31, a £2.6 million signing from Sheffield Wednesday in 1994, was booed by supporters during the drab goalless draw at home to Southampton last week and was left out of the team for the Tottenham match.

His written transfer request will go before the board of directors with Graham's recommendation. "What I will be recommending remains private," Graham said, "but I am not surprised by his request."

Andrei Kanchelskis, the former Manchester United and Everton winger, is reported to be unsettled at Fiorentina, the club he joined from Everton only two months ago. "He has been catapulted into a new world and is obviously handicapped by the language problem," Luciano Luna, the Fiorentina managing director, said.

Scottish clubs benefit by £7.25m

By MARK SOUSTER

AFTER one of their worst seasons in the five nations' championship, which included three record defeats, Scotland face the prospect of permanent relegation to the second division of world rugby by union unless drastic action is taken to bolster the domestic game.

Duncan Paterson, the Scottish Rugby Union's covenor of rugby, outlined his concerns at Murrayfield yesterday as the union announced plans to put £7.25 million, largely from income from the sale of tele-

vision rights, into club rugby over the next three years as part of its commitment to develop the game on a three-tier basis.

However, the vehicle for international success will remain professional districts, each with its own administration, professional coaches — who will be announced in a fortnight — and ultimately its own stadium.

Unless results improve in the European Cup next season via Scotland's three representatives, Caledonia, Scottish

Borders and Glasgow, Paterson believes that Scotland will be squeezed out of the competition, with dire consequences.

"We are hanging on by our fingernails," Paterson said. "Ten or 12 clubs in England and France want our places in Europe now. If that happens we could slide into oblivion. What we are trying to do is have a three-tier system and fast-track as fast as possible to ensure our international survival."

Five nations' threat, page 44

Whiff of revolution in air at Sussex

Pat Gibson finds entrenched positions that promise a stormy annual meeting

The date has been set, the manifesto issued, the battle lines drawn. And tonight the voters of one of the most conservative constituencies in the land will turn out in large numbers to show whether they really do believe that it is time for a change.

Not the general election, but something of far greater importance to those who care about such things as the annual meeting of Sussex County Cricket Club, whose members have been roused from their deck-chairs by their former fast bowler, Tony Pigott, who has a vision of the future and the soundbites to go with it.

His resolution, calling for a vote of no confidence in the committee and their immediate resignation en bloc, may not be tabled until a special meeting, which he has forced on April 8. However, if the annual meeting — switched from the county ground at Hove to Brighton's Grand Hotel because of the expected turnout — is hostile towards them, they may have no alternative but to go.

Like John Major, Ken Hopkins, the chairman, is turning a blind eye to the opinion polls. "As far as I am concerned," he said, "we were elected by the membership to serve for three years and in my case I will not seek re-election until February next year. If the vote goes against us at the special meeting, that will be a different matter."

Hopkins, 63, a retired retail manager with Seaboard, took over only 12 days ago when Alan Caffyn was forced to resign after blaming Alan Wells, the county captain who was dismissed in October, for the turmoil that included Wells's departure along with five other capped players — Ed Giddins, Ian Salisbury, Danny Law, Martin Speight and Jamie Hall.

Hopkins has the support of two members of the committee, his vice-chairman, Alan Wadley, and the club's surgeon, Frank Horan, but three

more who have only just been elected — Robin Marlar, a former captain, Jim May, a Brighton businessman, and Dick Holste, a long-serving member — have declared their support for Pigott's manifesto, suitably entitled Sussex 2000. This leaves another former captain, John Barclay as the floating voter holding the balance of power, al-



Barclay: key player

though it was suggested last night that he was drifting towards the old guard.

A meeting between Hopkins and Pigott did little to help. "We did find some common ground in that we both care about Sussex," Pigott said. "Where we differ is that so far no one has actually taken responsibility for what has happened at the club and no one, apart from myself, has actually stood up to be counted."

David Gravenny, the new chairman of England selectors, yesterday rebuked Raymond Illingworth, his predecessor, for suggesting that Michael Atherton should be replaced by either Nasser Hussain or Adam Hoggie as captain of England for the one-day internationals against Australia this summer. "Ray had two years as a selector," Gravenny said. "He's had his time and now it's down to Mike Gatting. Graham Gooch and myself to sort out which is the best way to sort out the problem."

Naked officialdom, page 5

EVANDER HOLYFIELD V. MIKE TYSON

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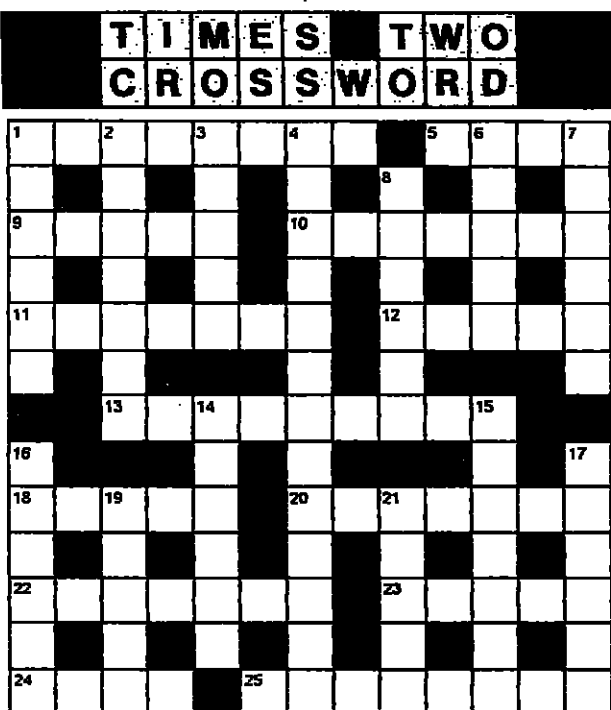
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No 1045

- ACROSS
- Put a number to (5)
 - Knock (10); portion of ticket (4)
 - Burning (5)
 - Allment (7)
 - Drawn; succumb (2,5)
 - Sift (5)
 - Really enjoy oneself (4,1,4)
 - Improvised (2,3)
 - (Esp. gov't) income (7)
 - Projecting fortification; defence (7)
 - Instrument; flower (5)
 - Arduous journey (4)
 - Trend; inclination (8)
- DOWN
- Unflected admin. body (6)
 - Horizontal bearing (of egg stand) (7)
 - Heavy step (5)
 - He married Juliet (Shak.) (5,8)
 - In that place (5)
 - Eight-gallon measure (6)
 - Largest US state (6)
 - One suffering accident, crime (6)
 - US president; shade of green (7)
 - Poor batsman; chatter (6)
 - Gift in will (6)
 - Hurry (5)
 - Strongly coloured; graphic (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1044

ACROSS: 6 Squeeze 7 Prism 9 Naked 10 Tennis 11 Trompe l'oeil 14 Smorgasbord 17 Rhombus 19 Agate 21 Soggy 22 Modular

DOWN: 1 Bulk 2 Headlong 3 Belt up 4 Open 5 Dividend 6 Sink 8 Midly 11 Through 12 Leonardo 13 Oasis 15 Sesame 16 Fear 18 Boyo 20 Aisle

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 1040

In association with BRITISH MIDLAND

ACROSS: 6 Tooth and nail 7 Junket 8 Impugn 9 Memo 10 Pot belly 12 Initial 16 Tube 18 Friend 20 Dorsal 21 Paradise Lost

DOWN: 1 Bookworm 2 Shut up 3 Anoint 4 Snap 5 Fingal 6 Truce 11 Exterior 13 Norway 14 Caddle 15 Ladder 17 Blist 19 Exam

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